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NEARBY

CM to hold talks with Cong. brass

BENGALURU
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who will leave for Delhi on Wednesday along with his Cabinet colleagues to inaugurate the Karnataka Bhavan building 'Kaveri', will hold meetings with the Congress top brass amid speculation of the Cabinet reshuffle. » PAGE 6

BMTC achieves record ticket revenue via UPI

BENGALURU
In March 2025, out of BMTC's total revenue of ₹83.39 crore, ₹35.5 crore came from UPI, thereby accounting for a record 39.8% of the total ticket revenue in a month. » PAGE 2

OPPORTUNITIES » PAGE 5

21 killed in explosion at firecracker warehouse

Building in Gujarat's Banaskantha district collapses; all the deceased hail from Harda and Dewas districts of M.P.; victims include children and women; police arrest the owner of the warehouse

Press Trust of India
PALANPUR (GUJARAT)

At least 21 persons, including children and women, were killed and six injured on Tuesday after a powerful blast and blaze ripped through a warehouse where firecrackers were allegedly stored and manufactured illegally in Banaskantha district of Gujarat, officials said.

The explosion, which occurred around 9.45 a.m., flattened the warehouse in an industrial area near Deesa town, around 30 km from the Banaskantha district headquarters in north Gujarat, they said.

"All the deceased were from Harda and Dewas districts of Madhya Pradesh," said Collector Mihir Patel.

"The identity of 19 persons has been established, while DNA samples are being taken to identify two others," he said.

The blast was so intense that it sent body parts of workers flying 200-300 metres away. The impact brought down the RCC slab of the structure.

Even family members of workers staying on the same premises were crushed to death after blocks of slabs fell on them, the Collector said.

Deepak Mohnani, who owns the warehouse – Deepak Traders, was arrested by a team of Banaskantha police from neighbouring Sabarkantha district on Tuesday night, Inspector General of Border Range Chirag Koradia said.

Firecrackers were allegedly stored and manufactured illegally at the warehouse, officials said.

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Out of hand: Debris at the site after a blast at a firecracker warehouse led to a blaze in Gujarat's Banaskantha on Tuesday. PTI

Eight die in West Bengal explosion

KOLKATA
Eight people, four children among them, died after a fire broke out at a house in the Pathar Pratima block of West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district, following an explosion late on Monday. Police confirmed the presence of firecrackers in the house that caught fire. » PAGE 12

SC terms bulldozing of six houses in U.P. inhumane, unlawful

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday found action taken by the Prayagraj Development Authority to bulldoze the homes of six private citizens into rubble "inhumane and illegal".

A Bench headed by Justice A.S. Oka ordered the authorities to pay ₹10 lakh each to the house owners as compensation for depriving them of their fundamental right to shelter without following due process.

Pasting of notices

Speaking for the Bench, Justice Oka said the illegal demolition conducted by the development authority in 2021 had shocked the conscience of the top court. The court reminded the authorities that rule of law still existed in the country and the fundamental right to shelter was a basic feature of the Constitution.

The court's order came after it realised that show-cause notices were not served on the house owners in person or by registered post but only affixed on their properties.

"This affixing business must be stopped. They have lost their houses because of this," Justice Oka remarked in the order.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Bulldozer being used to demolish an 'illegally built' house in Prayagraj. PTI

Diesel price up by ₹2 a litre in State

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a move that could trigger a ripple effect across the goods and services sector, the State government has announced an increase in sales tax on diesel from 18.44% to 21.17%. This decision has led to an immediate rise in the price of fuel by ₹2.05 a litre.

The notification regarding this tax revision was issued on Tuesday. The latest amendment modifies a previous notification on diesel taxation dated June 15, 2024, under the Karnataka Sales Tax Act, 1957.

The hike comes at a time when the State is witnessing rise in the prices of essential commodities. The hike in diesel price is expected to impact transportation and industrial sectors, potentially leading to higher costs in logistics and manufacturing.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 3

Tariff scare spooks markets; Sensex plunges 1,390 points

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

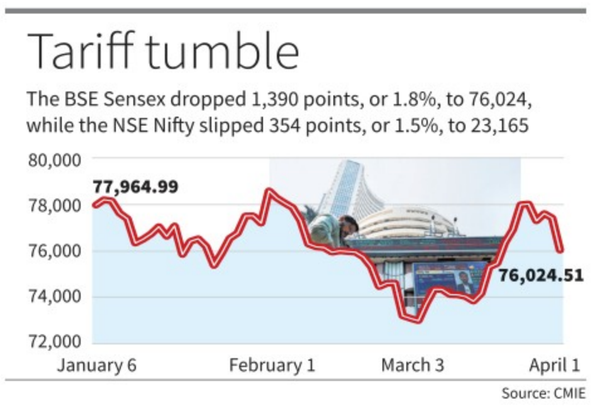
The first day of the new financial year disappointed investors as frontline stock indices fell nearly 2%, reflecting fears about the impending global tariffs that the United States plans to implement from April 2. Gold prices, on the other hand, hit a new record, as investors rushed to buy the metal known as a safe haven.

While the S&P BSE Sensex plunged 1,390 points or 1.80% to 76,024 points, led by a fall in technology, finance and banking stocks, the NSE Nifty-50 index slumped by 354 points or 1.5% to 23,165 points, amid high volatility.

"Major indices plummeted nearly 2%, reflecting anxieties surrounding the economic implications of U.S. President Donald Trump's imminent reciprocal tariffs scheduled for implementation April 2," said Devarsh Vakil, head of Prime Research at HDFC Securities.

The Nifty Realty, Consumer Durables and IT indices were major losers while Media and OiL & Gas were the two indices which ended in the green.

Gold prices hit a new record of ₹91,120 per 10 gm in the spot market and $3,120 per ounce in the global markets amid heightened demand for the safe haven metal, while the U.S. dollar index climbed to 103.9 against major currencies.



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Bill may have clause for not altering Waqf land status

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, set to be tabled in Parliament on Wednesday, is likely to have a provision mandating that the ownership of existing Waqf properties will remain as is unless they are "disputed" or are "government property".

This key provision was not there in the Bill that was tabled in Parliament in August 2024. While most of the provisions are likely to remain the same in the new Bill, some key changes may be inserted following concerns raised by the TDP and the JD(U).

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Probe Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra's role in 2020 riots, court tells police

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Five years after deadly communal riots ripped through north east Delhi, a city court ordered the police to file a first information report (FIR) and conduct further investigations into Delhi Law and Justice Minister Kapil Mishra's alleged role in the violence.

This is the first time that any court has ordered an FIR against Mr. Mishra regarding his role in the 2020 riots, which left 53 people dead and 700 injured, despite allegations that the Karawal Nagar MLA's speeches helped instigate the violence. The police maintained, on multiple occasions, that he did not play any part in the alleged conspiracy behind the riots, in which the accused were booked under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Kapil Mishra

The current case against Mr. Mishra stems from a complaint filed last December by Yamuna Vihar resident Mohammed Ilyas, seeking FIRs to be filed against six people, including Mr. Mishra. Of the five incidents mentioned by Mr. Ilyas, a cognisable offence was found against Mr. Mishra in one of them, warranting an FIR and further investigations, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Vaibhav Chaurasia of the Rouse Avenue Courts ruled on Tuesday.

The court added that if the complaint is found to be untrue, the Delhi Police has the liberty to proceed against Mr. Ilyas under Section 182 of the IPC (Section 217 of the BNSS).

According to the complaint, Mr. Mishra and his associates allegedly blocked the road at Kardampuri on February 23, 2020 and broke the carts belonging to Muslims and Dalits. The complainant alleged that police officials were hand in glove with the accused, with DCP Ved Prakash Surya accused of threatening untoward consequences if ongoing protests against the CAA were not stopped.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

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WTT

We are fighting with what we have

The paddler from Puerto Rico talks about her experience in the WTT Star Contender, China's dominance in the sport and the widening gulf between the Asian giant and the rest of the world

INTERVIEW

ADRIANA DIAZ

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Adriana Diaz is generally a chirpy character, a livewire on and off the table. The 24-year-old, ranked 16th in the world in women's singles, has single-handedly put Puerto Rico on the world table tennis map. And she's managed to do this in a country not particularly known for the sport. An attacking player armed with a bag full of trick shots including chop blocks and 'No Look' ones, Adriana has defeated a number of top-ranked paddlers and has carved a niche of her own through active engagement with fans and her scintillating display on the WTT Tour over the last few years.

In fact, a clip shared by WTT for the Star Contender Chennai recently showed a fan telling her, "I am your big fan." She replied coyly, "Really?"

The three-time Olympian, who lost in the round of 16 to Kim Nayeong of Korea in Chennai, is a huge of fan of India, its food, culture and players. In this interview, Adriana spoke about her progress on the WTT Tour, on being the first Puerto Rican to reach the world's top 20 and on playing in three Olympics, among other things.
Excerpts:

You frequently come to India. How do you find the country?

I've been to India plenty of times. I really like to be here. I like Indian culture. I respect it. I love Indian food. So, I'm very happy to be here in Chennai for the WTT Star Contender Chennai.

You are the first player from Puerto Rico to compete in three Olympics. Tell us a little about table tennis in your country.

Being the first Puerto Rican to qualify to the Olympics (Rio 2016) was amazing for me. At the time, I was 15 years old, so I didn't know how crazy it was.

I was like a little kid just playing the sport I loved. So, right now when I think of it, it's for me, it's a pleasure to be one of the best players in the world. Coming from Puerto Rico – which is a small island where not many people play table tennis – to play the sport at a high level is great.

But, I think table tennis is growing right now. There are many more TT players in Puerto Rico. There's also young talent. So, I'm very happy that I could help a little to inspire more young kids.

Table tennis runs in the family. You and your four sisters play the sport with your father coaching you all. What is the impact of having the sport play such a huge role at the family level too?

Yeah. We all grew with the sport. My mom met my dad while playing table tennis. So, we kind of grew up with it. One of the best childhood memories that I have is playing with my sisters for hours and being competitive. I think it really helped me develop as a professional table tennis player. As a kid, I was the third sister. I was very competitive. I always wanted to beat my big sister. I think that also helped me to have a little bit of character in the matches. As a family, we also helped each other a lot. I'm grateful for that.

You're in the world's top 20 in singles and the top 30 in women's doubles with Prithvika Pavade. You used to partner your sister Melanie in doubles and even broke into the top 10 once. How was it playing with your sister?

I mean, back in 2019-2019, we were in the world's top 10. My sister and I, we've always liked to play with each other. Normally, we don't fight, but sometimes it's inevitable! I have a very strong opinion sometimes but she's more laid-back than I am. But it is always fun. My sister was here with me in Chennai and I was very happy about that.

You have regularly been to China and experienced the table tennis culture there first-hand. What is it about the system there that makes them such a solid force in the sport?

There are many things that make China the best table tennis-playing country. I think the most important one is that they are a big team. They have so many people behind them. For example, in my case, I'm here (Chennai) with only my coach. Chinese players have a lot of physios and a lot of people who know the sport really well in their teams who help these players get to the top.

And, of course, China has a glorious tradition in table tennis. Most Asian countries are really good and potentially the best in table tennis. But we're fighting with what we have and what we know. I think there's still a lot to learn. But I'm very happy and pleased with what I've done.

We see you are interested in rap music? What are your interests outside of table tennis?

I enjoy a lot of music. Puerto Rico has a party culture. We like to dance, we like to listen to music. Bad Bunny is one of the best rappers

WTT

and singers in the world. We're proud of him and I usually love to hear some Bad Bunny (songs) before matches.

The other thing I do is this thing called Pretty-Ugly. It's a company I started three years ago alongside my sisters Melanie, Fabiola and Gabriela that produces school notebooks to support environmental and social causes by design and purpose. The notebooks are free of plastic and therefore environment-friendly and a part of the proceeds also go to charity.

You're still chasing your maiden WTT women's singles title. In WTT Contender Muscat in 2023, you came close, reaching the final losing to Hina Hayata in the final and became the first player from the Americas to reach a women's singles final in the WTT Series. How close do you think you are?

In Muscat, I reached the final, losing to Japan's Hina Hayata. I know table tennis is very difficult because there are so many players who are just pouring their hearts out. And they're practising every day, especially the Japanese, Indians and Koreans. There are a lot of people who want to get to the top and I'm one of them. Of course, it's very hard, but I believe in myself. I think I can achieve it.

At the age of just 24, you have featured in three Olympics. You tried quite hard for the medal in Paris, but couldn't go all the way. What was that experience like for you? Can you recall the meeting with Monica Puig, the 2016 Rio Olympics tennis gold medallist of Puerto Rico, who was the first medal winner from your country?

I think that the Olympics are the most important event in sports. I lost after leading 3-0, but I'm really happy with what I did in the Olympics because just being able to reach the quarterfinals in the Olympics is a huge deal. I got very close to it, losing in the round of 16. I'm just happy that I had that opportunity. Of course, I would have loved to take the match. It just wasn't possible. Maybe at the next Olympics, I hope I can go a step further and make the quarterfinals, semifinals and finals. And about Monica, we've talked sometimes. I was actually in the same room as her in Rio when she won the Olympics gold. I'm her fan. I hope I can be like her one day.

How big are the World Cup in Macao in April and World Championships in Doha for you personally?

I think every event is important, but especially World Championships and World Cup. It's even more because, you know, it's those events you really want to stand out. You really want to take it and win.

You are quite popular for those 'no-look shots' and chop blocks. You tried it in the match against Syndrela Das in the second round. Is it a go-to skill in your repertoire?

Really? I didn't know. I like to do that because I want the people watching to enjoy the match. My coaches aren't happy sometimes, because these shots make them nervous (laughs).

That said, if there are people watching my matches, I'm going to try to do something cool so that they can just enjoy the match. That's just my game.

How do you see the progress of women players in India?

I've played with Sreeja (Akula), Ayhika (Mukherjee), Sutirtha (Mukherjee) and Manika (Batra). They're all great players, really. The pimples (rubbers) are very hard to manage and it's also very hard for them to control it. I really respect them for that. Look at Manika. She's been at the top for many years. Sreeja is rising through the ranks now. Few others have also done that. Table tennis in India is great and I hope that India can continue this culture with the sport.

You love languages. You know English, Spanish and Mandarin. How did you pick them up?

I know Mandarin. I can understand the language since I've been travelling to China since I was eight years old. I never studied the language... it's just that I've heard it a lot.

You were part of the Waldner Cup, the exhibition tournament in December 2024. You played for Team World against Team Asia. How was the experience?

When the organisers reached out to be to play the Waldner Cup and told me the players taking part – Manika Batra, Ma Long, Truls Moregardh, and Hugo Calderano – I didn't hesitate. And it was one of the best weekends of my life. It felt like a school trip with friends. Everyone wanted to win, but we just had fun.

What does it take to be in the world's top 10 and and break the Asian stronghold?

If I knew, I would have done it already. If you enter the world's top 10, there are five Chinese and five Japanese players. I think they just have a big culture in table tennis. They know what to do.

Woman found dead under suspicious circumstances

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 44-year-old woman, identified as Hema, was found dead under mysterious circumstances at her residence at Nanjappa Layout, Adugodi. Her family has alleged that she was murdered by her husband, and has accused him of having an extramarital affair and maintaining a separate house for the other woman nearby, according to police officials.

According to Hema's family, she had previously confided to them about her husband's alleged affair and had even attempted suicide in January. They claim that a heated argument between the couple might have led to her murder.

Charges denied

However, Hema's husband has denied the allegations, asserting that she died by suicide, allegedly owing to concerns over their daughter's education.

"Contradicting his claims, Hema's family stated that no one had actually seen her body hanging, and they suspected foul play after seeing her remains at the hospital," a police official said, while adding that investigation is going on.

Hema's daughter, who had been studying in Russia, returned to Bengaluru on Monday and performed the last rites at the Adugodi crematorium.

(If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help)

BMTC achieves record 39.8% ticket revenue through UPI

Out of Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation's total revenue of ₹83.39 crore in March, ₹35.5 crore came from Unified Payments Interface

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In March 2025, out of Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC)'s total revenue of ₹83.39 crore, ₹35.5 crore came from Unified Payments Interface (UPI), thereby accounting for a record 39.8% of the total ticket revenue in a month.

Since January 2025, BMTC has been actively promoting cashless payment systems by implementing static UPI QR codes in 75% of its fleet. Many such posters with codes are stuck to the sides of the buses for passengers to scan and pay.

While the revenue from UPI was ₹19.66 crore in January, it jumped by almost ₹10 crore in February, resulting in a UPI ticket revenue of ₹29.36 crore (35.21% of the total ticket revenue of ₹83.39 crore).

On February 8, BMTC achieved a significant milestone as the digital payment (UPI) for tickets crossed ₹1 crore in a single day. The trend then continued with the average digital ticket fare collection per day standing at ₹1.04 crore in February and ₹1.14 crore in March.

Since January 2025, BMTC has been actively promoting cashless payment systems by implementing static UPI QR codes in 75% of its fleet. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Ticket fare collection via UPI

Year	January	February	March
2024	₹6,28,03,422	₹6,27,55,538	₹7,21,08,800
2025	₹19,66,91,636	₹29,36,10,703	₹35,50,60,415

Source: KSDL

"BMTC has actively promoted UPI payments to enhance passenger convenience and streamline operations. This initiative has led to a steady increase in digital transactions, reinforcing the corporation's commitment to modernising public transport services," said BMTC in a press release issued on Tuesday.

It is noteworthy that the hike in ticket prices, under which the minimum fare went up from ₹5 to ₹6 and maximum fare for non-air-conditioned buses went up to ₹32, also contributed to more conductors and passengers prominently using UPI as the mode of payment to avoid the change handling hassle.

"The widespread adoption of UPI payments has significantly improved the ease and speed of ticket transactions, benefiting both passengers and BMTC staff. This marks a crucial step in encouraging digital payment adoption among commuters, paving the way for a cashless and more efficient ticketing system," the release added.

Kannada option now available on website of Kempegowda airport

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has incorporated a Kannada option in the website of Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru.

BIAL said that this added feature in the local language ensures travellers can navigate airport services with ease and familiarity.

The new language option will offer the following features: real-time flight information in Kannada, enabling seamless updates on departures, arrivals, and delays, effortless navigation through an intuitive interface that allows travellers to book flights, access transport options, and explore airport amenities, localised support with essential travel information, including security procedures, baggage policies, lost and found, and special assistance services, comprehensive FAQs to address common queries, simplifying the travel process.

BIAL said this added feature ensures travellers can navigate airport services with ease and familiarity. FILE PHOTO

"KIA is more than just a transit hub. It is a gateway to Karnataka's rich cultural and linguistic heritage. We are pleased to introduce a Kannada version of our website that aims to create a more inclusive and accessible experience, ensuring our customers can access all necessary information in their preferred language," said Hari Marar, Managing Director and CEO, BIAL.

BIAL added that the introduction of a Kannada language version builds upon the airport's long-standing efforts to integrate Kannada across the airport environment.

Elderly woman found dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 74-year-old woman was found dead under suspicious circumstances at her residence on Railway Pipeline Road in RPC Layout, Vijayanagar, on Monday.

The deceased was identified as Siddamma. She lived alone. Police officials said that her earrings were missing, raising doubts about the nature of her death.

South East Central Railway
Tender Notice

Sr.No. (1) E-TEDER No: 201-ST-TENDER-2024 Dated: 25.03.2025 Work: "S&T Work in connection with TTR (in sets)-CS-49, TWS-137, CMSC-37, DS-30, TWS+WCMSC-31, CS+CMSC-75, TWS+CMSC-13, FS+TWS+WCMSC-05 &FS+CS+CMSC-01 under SSE/SIG/No.2/BSP)." **Tender Value** : ₹ 6,80,94,901.78/- (Rupees Six Crore Eighty Lakhs Ninety Four Thousand Nine Hundred One and Seventy Eight Paisa Only), **EMD** : ₹ 4,90,500/- (Rupees Four Lakh Ninety Thousand Five Hundred Only), **Submission of Tender Upto: 15.00 hrs. on 21.04.2025.**
The complete information of above e-tender notice is available over website **http://www.ireps.gov.in.** Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above tender.

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Tender submission end date	22/04/2025.

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3. Parking & Pay and Use : 03-04-2025, 04-04-2025, 07-04-2025, 23-04-2025
4. Parcel : 28-04-2025
5. Advertising ATM & Misc : 09-04-2025, 10-04-2025, 11-04-2025, 15-04-2025, 16-04-2025, 17-04-2025, 22-04-2025, 23-04-2025, 24-04-2025, 25-04-2025, 29-04-2025, 30-04-2025
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager
PUB/880/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25 Bengaluru
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Mr.PARVEEN SULTANA W/o.Mohammed Saleem K** is intending to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder from **Mrs. SULOCHANA.G W/o. Mr. Gopalakrishnan.K.S;** any person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our client shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing **Site No.09,** formed out of Composite Property No.42/1, Situated at **KOTHANUR VILLAGE (Kothanur Narayanapura), Krishnarajapura Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk,** (BBMP) Ward No.25, Bengaluru, Measuring East to West: **30 Feet** and North to South: **40 Feet**, in all measuring **1200 Square Feet,** & bounded on the: **East by : Site No.10, West by : Site No.8, North by : Private Property, South by Road.**
C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M : 9845846428, 9108784843, 080-48658774
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221
No.: S/RWP/Sale/Auction Programme/2025-26 **Date:** 28.03.2025 **Auction Notice No.:** 02/2025
Auction will be conducted for disposal of scrap material Skull, Slag and Other Misc. Scrap. The date of e-Auction Programme for the month of April, May, June, July, August & September-2025. **SN:** 1, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 11.04.2025 **SN:** 2, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 25.04.2025 **SN:** 3, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 16.05.2025 **SN:** 4, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 30.05.2025 **SN:** 5, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 13.06.2025 **SN:** 6, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 27.06.2025 **SN:** 7, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 11.07.2025 **SN:** 8, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 25.07.2025 **SN:** 9, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 08.08.2025 **SN:** 10, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 22.08.2025 **SN:** 11, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 12.09.2025 **SN:** 12, **Depot Conducting Auction:** RWP/Bela, Saran, **Date of e-Auction:** 26.09.2025. 1. The details of item to be sold in auction will be available in catalogue at www.ireps.gov.in. 2. The intending purchasers may inspect the scrap material before the auction during working hours at nominated locations. 3. To participate in e-auction, purchasers need to get themselves registered with ireps. For further details regarding registration and other condition of e-auction, please visit railway website www.ireps.gov.in
For PCMM/RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/ADVT/2024-25/117

FORM A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017)
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF ASSERTS AI INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

1	NAME OF CORPORATE PERSON	**ASSERTS AI INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED**
2	DATE OF INCORPORATION OF CORPORATE PERSON	**06/08/2020**
3	AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH CORPORATE PERSON IS INCORPORATED / REGISTERED	**ROC- Bangalore**
4	CORPORATE IDENTITY NUMBER / LIMITED LIABILITY IDENTITY NUMBER OF CORPORATE PERSON	**U72501KA2020FTC136925**
5	ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED OFFICE AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE (IF ANY) OF CORPORATE PERSON	**Level 8 Umiya Business Bay Tower 1 Cessna Business Park, Marathahalli Outer Ring Road, Bangalore-560103, Karnataka, India,**
6	LIQUIDATION COMMENCEMENT DATE OF CORPORATE PERSON	**29th March 2025**
7	NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND THE REGISTRATION NUMBER OF THE LIQUIDATOR, AUTHORISATION FOR ASSIGNMENT (AFA) Validity	**CS THIRUPAL GORIGE NO. 87, 2ND FLOOR, 21ST CROSS, 7TH MAIN, N S. PALYA, BTM 2ND STAGE, BANGALORE-560076, KARNATAKA, INDIA CELL +91 94483 84064, LL +080 7963 4233 EMAIL: GTHIRUPAL@GMAIL.COM IP REGISTRATION NO. IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00016/2016-17/10030 AFA valid up to 30/06/2025**
8	LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS	**28th April 2025**

Notice is hereby given that **Asserts AI India Private Limited** has commenced voluntary liquidation on **29th March 2025.**
The stakeholders of **Asserts AI India Private Limited** are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before **28th April 2025** to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7.
The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other stakeholders may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means. Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.
Sd/-
Thirupal Gorige
Liquidator
Date : 31/03/2025
Place : Bangalore

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: CAO/CN/BNC/103/2025 Dated : 26-03-2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Bagalkot - Kudachi New BG single line Project : Erosion control measures of embankment slopes in Khajjidoni - Lokapur section by providing and laying of Turf Reinforcement Mat (TRM) and Vetiver Grass saplings for bank height more that 5.0 mtr. **(Tender Ref. No. BGK-KUD-45-TRM)**	Rs. 11,75,20,000/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs on 22-04-2025
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/878/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

South East Central Railway
Tender Notice for Miscelleneous Work
TENDER NOTICE No: Sr. DEE(RS&G) BSP/OTP/24-25-43
Dated: 25.03.2025
Name of Work: 1. Bilspur - Provision of backup power supply arrengement UPS for PHOD offices, DRM & ADRM offices. 2. Improvement of Electrical Systems for PSA Oxygen Plant at Central Hospital, Bilaspur. **Tender Value (Approx)** :₹ 51,91,759.95/-, **EMD amount** : ₹ 1,03,800/-, **Tender Closing Date, Time:** 23.04.2025, 15.00 Hrs. For further details, eligibility criteria & complete details for the above work. Please refer/download tender document. Which is available on website **www.ireps.gov.in.**
Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer (RS&G)
CPR/10/FL/584 S.E.C.Railway, Bilaspur
South East Central Railway @secrail

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar 841221
E-Tender Notice No.:- 07/RWP/Engg/2024-25/WT/(Open) Date 28.03.2025
The Dy. CE/RWP/Bela for and on behalf of the President of India, invites Online **"e-Open Tender"** through Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS) **www.ireps.gov.in** for following works as detailed:- **1. Name of the work and Location, Approximate cost, Earnest money and Completion period of the work: Tender No.- 11_RWP_Engg_24_25_WT_Open, Name of Work:-** Renovation of toilet G.F. to 3rd floor in admin building at RWP/Bela. Approximate cost - Rs. 63,65,027/-, Tender form Cost - Nil, Earnest money- Rs. 1,27,300/-, Completion period of the work - 06 Months, **2. Tender closing date and time :** 21.04.2025 upto 14:30 Hrs. **3. Website particulars and notice board location where complete details of tender can be obtained and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. :** The above tender can be submitted only by the date and time as mentioned in the notice. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit Portal (IREPS) **www.ireps.gov.in.** The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with IREPS Portal **(www.ireps.gov.in)** for updates including Addendum/ Corrigendum/Cancellation with respect to the above tender because no such any notice/ information concerned that shall be published in newspaper.
Dy. Chief Engineer, RWP, Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt/2025-26/01

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No: 07/MYS/2025 of 26.03.2025.
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Sub Work-I : Harihar-Karajgi Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 kg D marked rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 390/200-392/020 (UP) for a total length of 1.82 km. **Sub Work-II :** Harihar-Karajgi Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 kg D marked rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 392/150-393/000 (UP) & 396/950-397/900 (UP) for a total length of 1.80 km. **Sub Work-III :** Harihar-karajgi Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 kg D marked rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 395/000-396/820 (UP) for a total length of 1.82 km. **Sub Work-IV :** Amaravathi Colony-Kotturu Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 kg rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 134/740-135/190 (SL) for a total length of 0.45 km. **Sub Work-V :** Birur-chikjajur Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 kg rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 211/800-211/1110 (DN) for a total length of 0.31 km. **Sub Work-VI :** Chikjajur-Karajgi Sec: TRR (P) of exg. 52 rails with 60 kg 90/110 UTS rails from km 337/800-338/200 (UP) & 382/400-383/600 (UP) for a total length of 1.60 km. **Sub Work-VII :** Chikjajur-Karajgi: Through rail renewal of exg. 'D' marked rails with new 60kg/90UTS rails from km. 306/900-314/000 (UP) for a length of 7.10 kms. **Sub Work-VIII :** Chikjajur Jn.- Rayadurg (SL).- TBR on scattered locations for a length of 10.20 Tkm. (SL- 10-10.5, 10.7-10.8, 24.3-24.7, 68.2-68.9, 74.65-75, 82.67-83, 83.68-83.9, 92.9-93.55, 94.6-94.9, 95.3-95.6, 98-99.95, 105.7-107.2, 108.6-109, 110.2-110.9, 115.5-116.6, 127.75-128.05, 130.5-130.9) **Sub Work-IX :** Chikjajur Jn.- Rayadurg (SL).- TBR- (Points& Crossing) - 10 Sets (HLV 50/A,50/B,65/A, 65/B- 4 sets, AMC-51 B, BOMN-50/B, 51/B, 63/B, 64/B, 65W- 5 sets) **Sub Work-X :** Standardization of sand hump in SSE/P.Way/DVG section -10 nos (SLU-4 nos, KAG-3 nos & DVG-3 nos) **Sub Work-XI :** AMC- Standardization of sand hump -2 Nos. **Sub Work-XII:** Birur-karajgi Section- Through Renewal of Existing 52kg 1 in 12 switches- 65 sets (ADEN/DVG-40 sets and ADEN/CTA 25 sets) & CMS crossings -123 sets (ADEN/DVG- 60 sets and ADEN/CTA-63 sets) by 60kg Thick Web Switches & Weldable CMS crossings	Rs. 3,51,17,133/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs on 17-04-2025
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Engineer / Co-ordination
PUB/881/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25 Mysuru
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

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For more details, Contact: 96117 53050 / 080-2333 3050

PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mustappa S/o.Shaik Pyera Jan, R/a No.24, Kaiwara Chintamani Taluk, Chikkaballapur District-563125, Karnataka have changed my name to Shaik Mustafa S/o.Mr.Shaik Pyara Jan vide affidavit dt: 29.03.25 sworn before Notary Ramachandrappa.C, B'luru

I, Yasnina Taj W/o.Esa Mustapha, R/a No.24, Kaiwara Chintamani Taluk, Chikkaballapur District-563125, Karnataka have changed my name to Yasmeen Taj W/o.Shaik Mustafa vide affidavit dt: 29.03.25 sworn before Notary Ramachandrappa.C, B'luru

I, SAM Rozario N, S/o. Natarajan.A, R/at Sobha Ruby Platinum, Block No.1A, Flat No.1061, 6th Floor, Nagasandra, Tumakuru Road, Bengaluru-560073 have changed my minor daughter's name from Paromita R to Paromita Rozario vide Affidvait dated 28.03.2025 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, Bengaluru.

I, Shaik Akbar Pasha S/o. Shaik Pyru Sab, R/a No.24, Kaiwara Chintamani Taluk, Chikkaballapur District-563125, Karnataka have changed my name to Shaik Akber S/o.Mr.Shaik Pyara Jan vide affidavit dt: 29.03.25 sworn before Notary Ramachandrappa.C, B'luru

I, MRS. Sharda Wani, mother of Shreya Wani, confirm the spelling variation in my first name as stated in Affidavit (Certificate No. IN–KA9537653447 4599X). My first name is listed as Sharada in my daughter's documents (10th and 12th grade certificates, passport, and birth certificate) but as Sharda in my official records. Both refer to the same individual, i.e. myself, and the discrepancy is due to a spelling error.

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DAY 12
INDIAN
POSTER
LEAGUE

1. Which iconic stadium hosted the 1987 Cricket World Cup final, becoming only the second venue to stage a Men's World Cup final?
2. During which 2002 ODI series did India's captain famously wave his shirt from the Lord's balcony after a thrilling victory, responding to Andrew Flintoff's earlier celebration in Mumbai?
3. Which Indian left-hander holds the record for the most centuries (22) in One Day Internationals (ODIs)?

*T&C apply.
Scan QR code or visit **newsth.live/SSIPLPA** to take the quiz. Get all three answers right and unlock a legendary Sportstar poster. **Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.**
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A BG-BGE

From gene to wings: decoding the migration pattern of painted lady butterflies

For many years, scientists had difficulty studying insect migration because of their size and inability to track their movement thanks to technological limitations; however, a boom in genomics and the development of tracking technologies in miniature has since allowed researchers to delve into it with astounding precision

Monika Mondal

Some plants, like snapdragons, can produce a wide range of colourful flowers. The difference between two flowers of different colours can be elicited by comparing their genomes and spotting the differences there, according to Daria Shipilina, a researcher at the Institute of Science and Technology Austria.

As an evolutionary biologist, Ms. Shipilina is fascinated by how genes in an organism's genome contribute to its observable traits, or phenotypes. A phenotype is a physical, biological, or behavioural characteristic shaped by genetics as well as environmental factors. Examples include skin and hair colour in humans, vocal behaviour among birds, and the migratory patterns of some animals.

"Migration is a very complex phenotype," according to Ms. Shipilina. "With colors, it's quite easy – we see it with our eyes." But migration is a complex adaptation that involves traits such as migratory timing, orientation, distance covered, and wing shape and size.

Insect in the blindspot

For many years, scientists struggled to study insect migration due to their small size and inability to track their movement thanks to technological limitations. But a boom in genomics and the development of tracking technologies in miniature has allowed researchers like Shipilina to delve into insect migration with astounding precision. Taking advantage of the new tools at her disposal, Ms. Shipilina has been studying if there are both short-distance and long-distance migrants among butterflies as there are among birds by phenotyping them.

"For birds, we know a lot – we understand their migration routes and how genes control their migratory behaviour in some species," Ms. Shipilina said. "We know practically nothing about insects and specifically the genomics of insect migration comparatively."

In a study published recently in the journal *PNAS Nexus*, her team of researchers from institutes in Austria, Benin, Canada, Senegal, Spain, and Sweden reported that short- and long-distance migrants among painted lady butterflies (*Vanessa cardui*) don't have significant genetic differences between them. Instead, the distances across which each member migrates appears to be influenced by environmental conditions.

This is unusual. "Most migration genomic studies have focused on birds. But butterflies behave differently: they are a moving population that genetically behaves as one," Ms. Shipilina said.

The painted lady follows a multi-generational migration cycle, meaning no single individual completes the entire journey. ALVESGASPAR (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Over deserts and seas

The painted lady butterfly is known for its remarkable ability to thrive in diverse climates, from temperate grasslands to deserts, and is found on every continent except Antarctica and South America.

Scientists have previously tracked this butterfly traveling up to 15,000 km in a single migratory cycle, one of the longest insect migrations on the earth.

And unlike birds, which often return to the same breeding grounds at the end of their journeys, the painted lady follows a multi-generational migration cycle, meaning no single individual completes the entire journey. Ms. Shipilina called it a "family business": each cycle spans eight to 10 generations, with each butterfly living for two to four weeks on average.

The researchers, who are currently pursuing a project called 'Butterfly Migration,' observed the migration and behaviour of the butterflies from locations in Benin, Senegal, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, and Malta. They collected data over many years of the migration, mating, and other behaviours as the insects moved seasonally between Europe and North Africa.

In spring, painted ladies migrate north from the Sahara desert, crossing the Mediterranean into southern Europe, where they breed. By late summer and autumn, their offspring begin the southward return, flying across Spain and Italy back to North Africa.

"They are very strong flyers and are capable of developing very high speeds and flying very high," Ms. Shipilina said, adding that their thoracic muscles are akin to those of a bodybuilder, with several adaptations for long-distance flight. To understand their places of origin, the researchers captured the butterflies at the end of their life cycle and analysed their wings.

> Most migration genomic studies have focused on birds. But butterflies behave differently: they are a moving population that genetically behaves as one

Answers in isotopes

The butterflies' wings retain stable isotopes of hydrogen and strontium absorbed from the food and water they consume as larvae. Because the wings are metabolically inactive, they preserve the isotopic signature of their birthplace.

Thus, the researchers analysed the ratios of the isotopes in the wings of specimens. Since different isotopes degrade at different rates, their relative abundance is a signature. The challenge here, according to Ms. Shipilina, is finding out "where on the planet this combination of two stable isotopes is found."

The team used European and North African isoscapes, maps of the distribution of isotopes of hydrogen and strontium. Then based on where the researchers found the butterflies and from the places of their origin determined using the isoscapes, they estimated the distance covered by each butterfly.

Genetic analysis revealed that short- and long-distance painted ladies don't form distinct genetic groups. Instead, they belonged to a single interbreeding population, Ms. Shipilina said.

The study also found that wing size and shape didn't seem to affect the migration distance. The findings also challenged an assumption that higher wing wear suggests greater distance: some painted ladies estimated to have traveled 4,000 km had minimal wing-wear.

Comings and goings

The study has raised new questions for Ms. Shipilina and her team. Their future research will explore whether butterflies from distant regions, such as the U.K. and Japan, bear genetic differences and how migration in painted ladies looks like in other parts of the world, especially in different environmental conditions.

"But for now, butterfly migratory genomics is not sufficiently described at all," Ms. Shipilina said. By expanding both genetic and isotopic research, scientists hope to better understand how environmental conditions shape insect migration and how these patterns may shift in response to climate change.

Ms. Shipilina added that she believes insect migration will genetically be "quite different" from how migration works in birds. "And I really hope these two will coexist together so we can compare, can mix and match, find similarities, and differences."

(Monika Mondal is a freelance science and environment journalist. a.monikamondal@gmail.com)

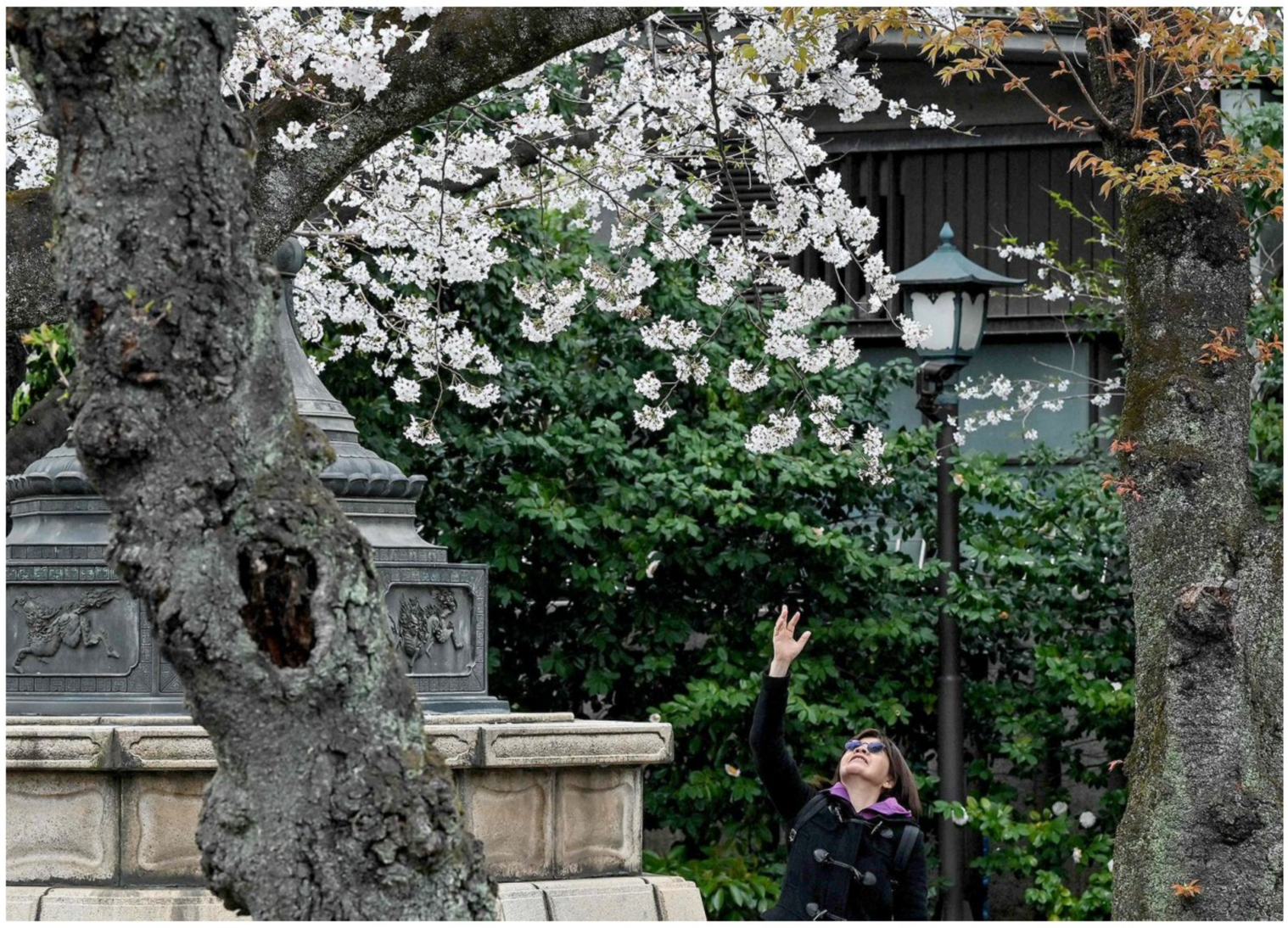
THE GIST

Researchers found that short and long-distance migrants among painted lady butterflies don't have significant genetic differences. Instead, the distances across which each member migrates appears to be influenced by environmental conditions

The painted lady is known for its ability to thrive in diverse climates, and is found on every continent except Antarctica and South America. Scientists have tracked this butterfly traveling up to 15,000 km in a single migratory cycle

Scientists hope to understand how environmental conditions shape insect migration and how these may shift in response to climate change. Researchers believe that insect migration will genetically be 'quite different' from migration in birds

BIG SHOT



A woman stands under cherry blossoms at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, Japan on March 31. The Japan Meteorological Agency monitors about 50 designated cherry trees to identify the start of the blossom season. This year, it began two weeks earlier than normal thanks to warmer temperatures, the agency said. AFP

QUESTION CORNER

Brain + glitch = doubling typo

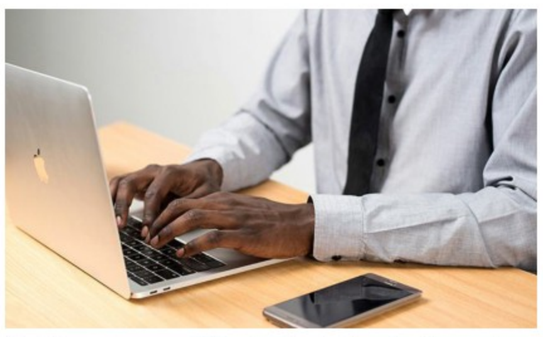
The Hindu Bureau

Q: I often make typing errors that follow a consistent pattern. One error involves an apparent pre-empting of double letters, for example 'betwwen' or 'floopy disc.' This does not happen when I write. Why does this happen?

A: Analyses of large corpora of typed text reveal that these doubling errors are a common class of typographical errors. They only arise in words that have adjacent double letters, or geminates, and are attributed to a special repetition marker in the brain. This marker is associated with a particular position in a word and causes immediate repetition of the letter at that position.

Sometimes the marker may be triggered too early or too late, causing incorrect repetition of a nearby letter. Thus, 'between' appears as 'betwwen'.

Repetition markers are assumed necessary by the suppression of actions during the production of a well-learned sequence. The temporary suppression of each action immediately after its execution prevents it from persevering or competing with subsequent action. This suppression is problematic when immediate repetition is required, which explains the need for the special repetition marker.



Doubling errors occur in handwriting but are less frequent. Representative photo. CYTONN PHOTOGRAPHY/UNSPLASH

Doubling errors occur in handwriting but are less frequent. This probably reflects the slower pace of handwriting and the fact that repeated letters don't necessarily arise from the same, single action. The exact form of each handwritten letter depends on the context of surrounding letters, suggesting several component actions in the writing of a letter, in contrast to the single depression of a key on a keyboard.

— Rik Henson, Cambridge

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Outer Ring Road set for a major revamp

Among the proposed plans are white-topped carriageway, uniform service roads, upgraded public utilities, and air-conditioned bus shelters; work expected to begin in about four months

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike budget has allocated ₹400 crore for the redevelopment of the ORR. FILE PHOTO

The 22.7 km Outer Ring Road (ORR) stretch between K.R. Puram and Central Silk Board is set for a major revamp, featuring a white-topped carriageway, uniform service roads, upgraded public utilities, air-conditioned bus shelters, among the proposed plans. The redevelopment work is expected to begin in about four months.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) budget has allocated ₹400 crore for the redevelopment of the ORR, with the project to be executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The government will soon be constituting the SPV to implement big-ticket projects including tunnel roads.

"Within three months, a detailed project report (DPR) will be prepared, followed by the tendering process. The government has a preliminary design to upgrade the ORR to world-class infrastructure standards," a source in the BBMP said.

The stretch, infamous for traffic notoriety, is witnessing Phase (2A) metro line construction on the carriageway and is expected to be completed in mid-2026. The SPV will be carrying out works in stretches where metro work has ended.

BBMP engineer-in-chief B.S. Prahlad talking to *The Hindu* said of the 17-km stretch, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has vacated about 12 km beginning from Lowry junction at K.R. Puram.

Besides, BMRCL has not occupied service roads on either side. This gives the advantage for the SPV to commence work as soon as the tender process is completed. Mr. Prahlad said the main six-lane carriageway will see white-topping and many other features will be incorporated.

Civic activist R.K. Mishra, who is involved in the planning process, said as ORR has emerged as a major economic corridor and generates 32% of the total IT revenue for India, it has to be upgraded to international standards. Keeping this aspect in mind the mega plan is being drawn.

Detailing the proposed infrastructure, Mr. Mishra said the service road (two-lane) will be widened between six metres and 7.5 metres wherever necessary to make it uniform. The service road will see stone matrix asphalting, a gap-graded asphalt mix known for its high rut resistance and durability.

Along the service roads near the junctions/tech parks where space is available, public utilities will be built. The public utilities will have benches for citizens, parks and others to enhance the aesthetics of the ORR.

Mr. Mishra further said along the service roads, large footpaths will be built for pedestrians besides planting saplings in the space between the main carriageway and service road. Kerb stones will be used for the construction of footpaths. Besides existing foot overbridges and at metro stations, such infrastructure will be planned in places necessary. Drains will be remodelled to make them silt resistant.

The main carriageway will be white-topped, with areca palm trees planted in the median.

Existing bus shelters will be upgraded, and some will be transformed into air-conditioned stops. Additionally, plans are under way to relocate certain bus shelters beneath flyovers, allowing buses to operate under them for improved commuter convenience.

"Under the flyover, we are planning more public utilities and renting of space for private entities for setting shops in line with coffee shops," he said.

From Page One

Diesel price up by ₹2

While the government has not explicitly stated the rationale behind this decision, it is widely believed that the move aims to bolster the State revenue.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, K. Radhakrishna Holla, president of the Karnataka State Travel Operators' Association, warned that the tax revision could create a cascading effect on the prices of goods and services.

He emphasised that travel and transport operators were already struggling with rising toll, and this additional burden would further put a strain on their financial situation.

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BBMP revises property tax on parking spaces

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a significant move to streamline property tax calculation, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has standardised and reduced the tax rate for vehicle parking space under the new Unit Area Value (UAV) system.

The revised tax structure, applicable to both residential and commercial properties in Bengaluru, aims to bring uniformity and ease the financial burden on property owners, said a BBMP official. According to the new rates, residential property owners will now pay ₹600 per year for a 150 sq. ft. parking slot, calculated at 20% of the assessed value at ₹2 per sq. ft. for 10 months.

Commercial and non-residential property owners will be charged ₹1,125 per year for the same parking space, based on 25% of the assessed value at ₹3 per sq. ft. for 10 months.

The structure previously varied across six zonal classifications. As per the old calculation, residential units were required to pay 50% of their total property tax as parking tax, with rates differing based on zones and locations.

Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), BBMP, emphasised that the adjustment aims to bring fairness and clarity to parking tax calculations, ensuring a balanced approach across different property categories. The move is expected to provide relief to taxpayers in Bengaluru while maintaining revenue stability for the civic body.

The standardisation of parking tax is part of BBMP's ongoing efforts to rationalise the property tax structures, and make compliance easier for property owners.

Blackmail: 3 in custody

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the Bengaluru police has taken three people into custody, including a kindergarten teacher, on the charges of blackmail and extortion. The suspects, identified as Sridevi Rudagi, Ganesh Kale, and Sagar More, are residents of Vijayapura district.

According to the police, Sridevi, who was running a preschool in Mahalakshmi Layout, first became acquainted with the victim, Murali (name changed), in 2023 when he enrolled his children at her institution. At a later stage, she borrowed ₹2 lakh from him to cover school-related expenses, promising to return the amount in 2024.

"When Murali requested repayment in January 2024, Sridevi allegedly proposed that he become a partner in the preschool instead. As he continued pressing for his money, she invited him to her residence, where she allegedly demanded ₹50,000. Over time, her demands escalated to ₹15 lakh in exchange for a relationship," a police official said.

On March 12, Sridevi reportedly contacted his wife and asked him to visit the preschool under the pretext of collecting the children's transfer certificates. Upon his arrival, he was confronted by Ganesh and Sagar, who accused him of an illicit affair with Sridevi and threatened to expose him to his family.

The accused allegedly demanded ₹1 crore in hush money. Eventually, the sum was negotiated down to ₹20 lakh, and the victim was allegedly compelled to hand over ₹1.9 lakh before being released.

On March 17, Sridevi allegedly contacted Murali once again, this time threatening to publicise explicit video conversations unless he paid ₹15 lakh. Unable to withstand the persistent threats, he approached the CCB and lodged a complaint.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Hectares covered under PDMD scheme in Andhra since 2015

96.97 In lakh hectares. The Minister of State for Agriculture Ramnath Thakur in his written reply to the Lok Sabha, said this includes 20,819 hectares covered under the Per Drop More Drop (PDMD) scheme in the Tirupati district. PTI

Number of accounts banned by WhatsApp in India during Feb.

9.7 In million accounts. WhatsApp said it banned more than 9.7 million accounts in India during February 2025; 1.4 million of those were proactively banned prior to any reports. Releasing its monthly safety report, the messaging app shared tips on using the platform responsibly. PTI

Number of people killed in the Myanmar earthquake

2,719 The death toll from the devastating 7.7 magnitude earthquake that hit Myanmar has surpassed 2,700, with thousands more injured. The head of Myanmar's military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, told a forum that 441 are still missing. AP

The growth in gross GST collection in the month of March

9.9 In per cent. Gross GST collection in March grew 9.9% to over ₹1.96 lakh crore, government data showed. GST revenue from domestic transactions rose 8.8% to ₹1.49 lakh crore, while revenue from imported goods was higher, 13.56% to ₹46,919 crore. PTI

Number of deaths in Gaza since Israel resumed strikes

1,042 The health ministry in Gaza said that 1,042 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory since Israel resumed large-scale strikes on March 18. The figure includes 41 people killed in the past 24 hours. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why India needs to clean its air

India's clean air future will be shaped not by dashboards but by people, partnerships, and purpose. Lasting solutions depend on those working on the ground: municipal officers, planners, engineers, and community leaders

FULL CONTEXT

Ajay Singh Nagpure

India's air pollution crisis is not just a seasonal inconvenience. It's a persistent, silent pandemic that chokes our lungs every winter and quietly lingers throughout the year. Hospitals overflow with respiratory cases, schools shut down, cities disappear under layers of smog, and Indian metros regularly top global pollution rankings.

Given the scale of this crisis, it's worth asking: what is India actually doing to clean its air? While initiatives like the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), Bharat VI, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), and targeted efforts to phase out coal-burning industries in the National Capital Region mark important progress, the national response remains fragmented and slow-moving. Without stronger alignment and faster implementation, transformative change may remain out of reach.

Tuning in to ground realities

The challenge begins with how India understands air pollution. It's often seen as a technical problem when in reality it's a complex structural issue shaped by governance capacity, demographic pressure, socio-economic disparity, behavioural norms, and entrenched economic systems. Scientists play a vital role in diagnosing air quality – like physicians identifying symptoms – but lasting solutions depend on those working on the ground: municipal officers, planners, engineers, and community leaders. These actors operate within tight budgets, outdated infrastructure, and competing local demands. Strengthening their capacity and aligning mandates with air quality goals is essential for sustained change.

This complexity becomes especially relevant when considering India's goal to reduce PM2.5 levels by 2026 to 40% of what it was in 2017. While ambitious and necessary, the target risks falling short if it isn't mindful of on-ground realities. Consider transportation, for instance. It's not enough to say "vehicles cause pollution." We need to ask: what types of vehicles are on the road? What fuel do they use? How old are they? How far do they travel? How bad is traffic? Without this level of detail, it's difficult to craft realistic, actionable plans for local governments. To turn national goals into real progress, we must connect them to the everyday activities that actually drive emissions.

Proactive programs

While China is often called a success story, it came at a steep price – ₹22 lakh crore over five years for urban centres. India's NCAP budget is less than 1% of that. However, if we include allied programs like PMUY (₹18,128 crore), the program for Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India or Fame II (₹10,795 crore), Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (₹1.4 lakh crore), and NCAP itself (₹11,542 crore), a broader ecosystem of air quality financing becomes apparent. They target emission sources and deserve recognition as part of India's clean air strategy.

The NCAP continues to struggle with how its funds are allocated and how progress is measured. It relies heavily on ambient air quality data, which is often affected by weather and geography, making short-term improvements hard to detect. For example, initiatives like PMUY and waste-burning controls have reduced emissions in several areas, but these gains may not reflect in pollution readings, creating a misleading sense of stagnation. Shifting to activity-based metrics – such as the number of stoves replaced or diesel buses retired – would offer a clearer picture of impact and strengthen accountability.

Realigning metrics alone isn't enough. Local governments also need access to high-resolution, open-source data on emissions-generating activities: where waste is burned, which households use solid fuels, where construction is active, and which roads face the heaviest traffic. Without such data, air pollution remains an abstract issue, disconnected from daily governance. This data gap directly affects how NCAP funds are used. Between 2019 and 2023, only 60% of the funds released were utilised, reflecting not a lack of intent but institutional misalignment. Air quality continues to be treated as a parallel concern rather than a core municipal function.

To shift from intent to impact, India needs a phased, data-driven approach. Phase I: build local emissions profiles to identify the biggest pollution sources; Phase II: link funding directly to targeted actions based on that data; and Phase III: track reductions in emissions, not just pollution concentrations, to measure real progress. This shift from passive monitoring to proactive management mirrors how meaningful change happens on the ground.

Guarding against optics

However, as India adopts more digital tools, it must avoid falling into the "Western trap"– overreliance on high-tech, urban-centric data and solutions without addressing basic pollution sources. Smog towers, real-time apportionment, and AI dashboards may appear innovative but offer little value if burning biomass and the use of old industrial processes and polluting vehicles go unchecked. Cities like London and Los Angeles rolled out advanced sophisticated technologies only after decades of systemic reform. India must sequence its strategies correctly.

This misalignment also risks elite capture. Urban hubs may get cutting-edge tools while rural and informal sectors – responsible for a large share of emissions – are neglected. Worse, these tools may distract from structural reforms, shifting attention to optics over outcomes. More data does not equal more action if local agencies lack authority or the resources to use it.

A key fix is distinguishing between academic research and solution-focused implementation. While long-term innovation is important, policymakers need short-term, scalable models they can act on. India must create separate funding streams: one for research and another for immediate, on-ground interventions. Otherwise, we risk producing more papers than progress.

What are other countries doing?

Global examples offer guidance without imitation. China closed coal plants. Brazil used community-led waste systems. California reinvested pollution revenue in poor communities. London banned coal-use before launching sensors. Each succeeded by following a path grounded in its context. India must do the same– innovate programmes which are federalism-friendly, subsidy-driven, and tailored to its informal economy.

Ultimately, India's clean air future will be shaped not by dashboards but by people, partnerships, and purpose. We must fix the plumbing before painting the walls. Clean air must be a right for all, not a privilege for a few. Securing that right will take more than promises. It will take coordination, courage, and a commitment to act.

Ajay S. Nagpure is urban systems scientist at the Urban Nexus Lab at Princeton University.

For a clear future: An anti-smog gun spraying water to fight air pollution and dust at Kartavya Path, New Delhi on March 31. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

THE GIST

- The challenge begins with how India understands air pollution. It's often seen as a technical problem when in reality it's a complex structural issue shaped by governance capacity, demographic pressure, socio-economic disparity, behavioural norms, and entrenched economic systems.
- Local governments need access to high-resolution, open-source data on emissions-generating activities: where waste is burned, which households use solid fuels, where construction is active, and which roads face the heaviest traffic.
- As India adopts more digital tools, it must avoid falling into the "Western trap"— overreliance on high-tech, urban-centric data and solutions without addressing basic pollution sources

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Sr. No.	Ministry/ Department	Product	Indian Standard	Enforcement date
1	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Wrought aluminium and aluminium alloys-Extruded round tube and hollow section for general engineering purposes	IS 1285: 2002	01-Apr-25
2	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Wrought Aluminium Wire for Electrical Purposes	IS 2067: 1975	01-Apr-25
3	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Wrought aluminium and aluminium alloys for manufacture of utensils	IS 21:1992	01-Apr-25
4	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Corrugated Aluminium Sheet	IS 1254:2007	01-Apr-25
5	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Aluminium alloy forging stock and forgings (Alloy 24345) for aerospace applications	IS 7902:2001	01-Apr-25
6	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Safety of household and similar electrical appliance - particular requirements - domestic electric clothes washing machines	IS 302 (Part 2/Sec 7): 2010	01-Apr-25
7	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Evaporative Air Coolers (Desert Coolers)	IS 3315:2019	01-Apr-25
8	Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Air Filters for general ventilation Technical specifications requirements and Classification system based upon particulate matter efficience (ePM)	IS 17570 (Part 1): 2021 ISO 16890-2: 2016	01-Apr-25
9	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy	Solar Flat Plate Collector for Solar Water Heating Systems	IS 12933 (Part 1): 2003	14-Apr-25
			IS 12933 (Part 2): 2003	14-Apr-25
10	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy	All Glass Evacuated Tubes Solar Water Heating System	IS 16544: 2016	14-Apr-25
11	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy	Storage Water Tank for All Glass Evacuated Tubes Solar Water Heating Systems	IS 16542: 2016	14-Apr-25
12	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Lauric Acid	IS 10931: 1984	24-Apr-25
13	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Acid Oil	IS 12029: 1986	24-Apr-25
14	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Palm Fatty Acids	IS 12067: 1987	24-Apr-25
15	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Rice Bran Fatty Acids	IS 12068: 1987	24-Apr-25
16	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Coconut Fatty Acids	IS 12069: 1987	24-Apr-25
17	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Hydrogenated Rice Bran Fatty Acids	IS 12361: 1988	24-Apr-25
18	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Digital Television Receiver for Satellite Broadcast Transmission	IS 18112: 2022	26-Apr-25
19	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Morpholine	IS 12084: 2018	01-May-25
20	Ministry of Heavy Industries	Low – Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear: Part 4 Contactors and Motor – Starters: Sec 2 Semiconductor Motor Controllers and Starters and Soft Starters (Second Revision) — All types of product ratings	IS/IEC 60947 : Part 4 : Sec 2 : 2020	10-May-25
21	Ministry of Heavy Industries	Low – Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear: Part 4 Contactors and Motor – Starters: Sec 3 Semiconductor Motor Controllers and Starters for Non Motor Loads (Third Revision) — All types of product ratings	IS/IEC 60947 : Part 4 : Sec 3 : 2020	10-May-25
22	Ministry of Heavy Industries	Low-Voltage Switchgear and Controlgear Part 5 Control Circuit Devices and Switching Elements Section 2 Proximity Switches (First Revision) — All types of product ratings	IS/IEC 60947 : Part 5 : Sec 2 : 2019	10-May-25
23	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Ethylene Dichloride	IS 869:2020	12-May-25
24	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Vinyl Chloride Monomer	IS 17442:2020	12-May-25
25	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	H Acid	IS 8637 : 2020	14-May-25
26	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	K Acid	IS 11557 : 1986	14-May-25
27	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Vinyl Sulphone	IS 18340 : 2023	14-May-25
28	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Safety of Household and similar electrical appliances - Part 2 particular requirement sec 76 electric fence energizers	IS 302-2-76: 1999	19-May-25
29	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Textiles - High Density Polythylene (HDPE)/ Polypropylene (PP) Woven Sacks for Packaging of 50 kg Cement	IS 11652 : 2017	06-Jun-25
30	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Textiles - Polypropylene (PP)/ High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) laminated woven sacks for mail sorting, storage, transport and distribution	IS 17399 : 2020	06-Jun-25
31	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Textiles - Polypropylene (PP) woven, laminated, block bottom valve sacks for packaging of 50 kg cement	IS 16709 : 2017	06-Jun-25
32	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Polypropylene (PP) materials for moulding and extrusion	IS 10951 : 2020	24-Jul-25
33	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Poly vinyl chloride (PVC) Homopolymers	IS 17658 : 2021	24-Jul-25
34	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Poly-Laminated aluminium cable wrap	IS 16012 : 2012	01-Jul-25
35	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Flashlight - Specification	IS 2083 : 2024	28-Jul-25
36	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Stainless steel seamless pipes and tubes for general service	IS 17875 : 2022	01-Aug-25
37	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Stainless Steel Seamless pipes and tubes for general service	IS 17876 : 2022	01-Aug-25
38	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Acetic Acid	IS 695 : 2020	03-Aug-25
39	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Methanol	IS 517 : 2020	03-Aug-25
40	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Aniline	IS 2833 : 2019	03-Aug-25
41	Ministry of Textile	Cotton Bales	IS 12171 : 2019	27-Aug-25
42	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA) Copolymers	IS 13601 : 1993	03-Oct-25
43	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Styrene (Vinyl Benzene)	IS 4105 : 2020	24-Oct-25
44	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Acrylonitrile	IS 12540 : 1988	24-Oct-25
45	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Maleic Anhydride, Technical	IS 5149 : 2020	24-Oct-25
46	Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals	Toluene	IS 537 : 2011	22-Dec-25
47	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Work Chair	IS 17631 : 2022	14-Feb-26
48	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	General purpose chairs and stools	IS 17632 : 2022	14-Feb-26
49	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Tables and desks	IS 17633 : 2022	14-Feb-26
50	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	Storage units		14-Feb-26

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

The radical and enduring legacy of Shivaji

On April 3, the death anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who passed away at 50 in 1680, a lookback through books, charters and memoirs to understand what made the king a transformative force in a feudal age

Prathmesh Kher

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj mounted the most famous opposition to Aurangzeb's expansionism during Mughal rule in India. Shivaji began his journey as a Maratha warrior and eventually became a self-made king.

Often leading from the front, Shivaji guided his men into dangerous campaigns often at risk to his own life and limb. In doing so, he earned both the respect and loyalty of his soldiers, many of whom often sacrificed their lives in the cause of their beloved king – leading to the creation of the Hindavi Svarājya, an Indian autarky.

Starting out in the 1640s, with a small band of warriors, Shivaji had, by the mid-1660s, earned the confidence of enough fighters to have brought the number to the tens of thousands. A master of guerrilla warfare, referred to as *ganimi kawa* in Marathi, his agile modus operandi ran rings around the numerically superior but bulky Mughal army. Swift cavalry raids were married with disruption of enemy supply lines; and hit-and-run tactics were used in harsh terrain causing considerable damage to enemy forces.

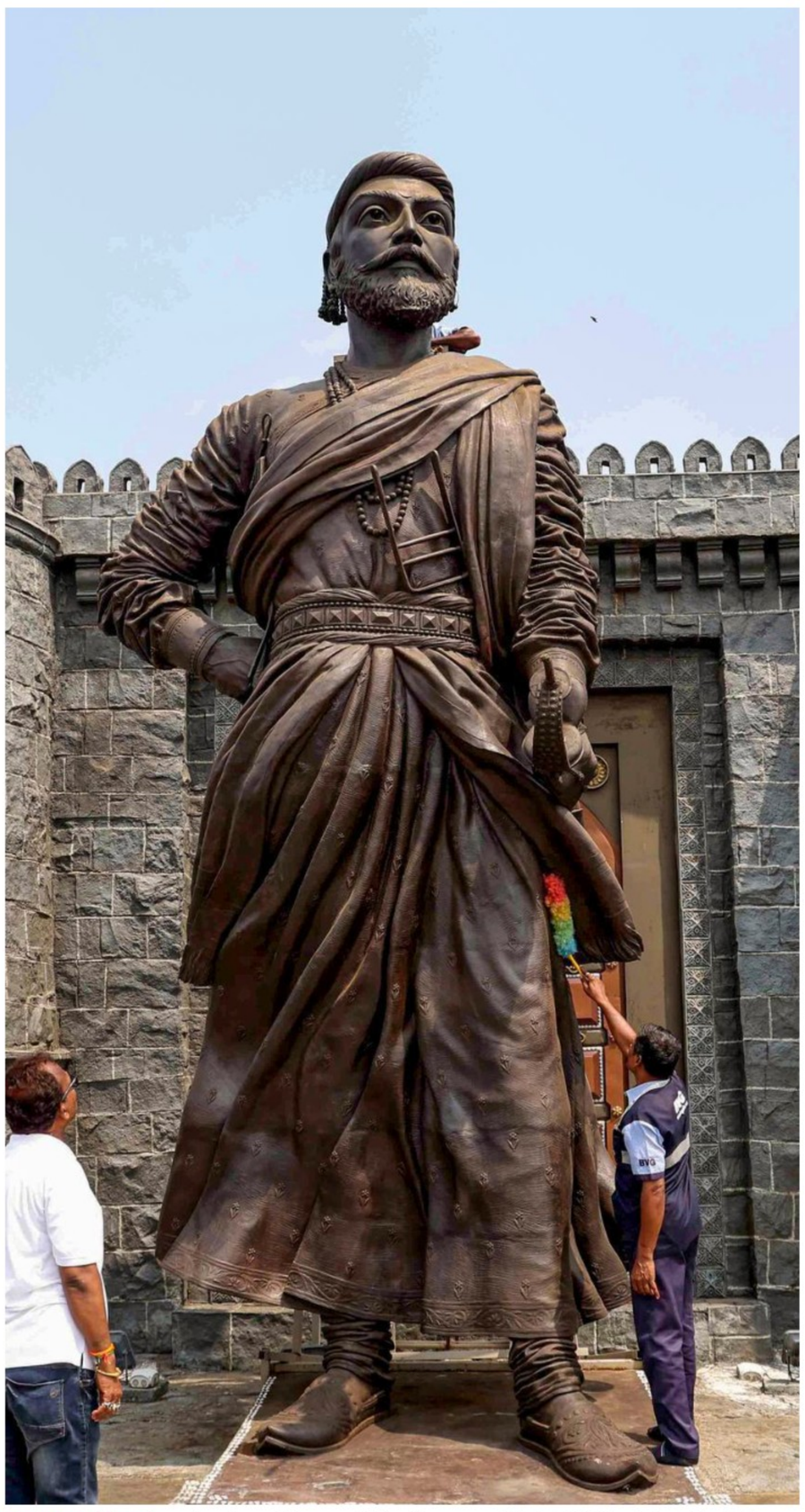
Francois Martin, the first Governor-General of Puducherry in French India, contrasts the military organisation of the Mughal army with the Maratha army in his *Mémoires*. "The Maratha forces were mobile, light footed, and lived a life of spartan simplicity in camp," Martin notes. The warrior king's persona is also distinguished in Martin's journals by a lack of pomp and luxury generally associated with royalty, describing him as often sitting on the ground with his soldiers.

French traveller Jean de Thévenot describes Shivaji as being "short and tawny, with quick eyes that shew a great deal of wit." De Thévenot also mentions that Shivaji would eat once a day, and in common attendance with his soldiers. Abbé Barthélemy Carré says this of the man: "To his quickness of movement he added, like Julius Caesar, a clemency and a bounty that won him the hearts of those his arms had worsted."

But what sort of rule was Shivaji to usher in?

The subaltern king

In recent years, political and social organisations have often dug their heels on the subject of Shivaji's caste identity. This is a disservice to the man, the bulk of whose comrades, lieutenants, and officers were men who hailed from the so-called 'lower' castes, poor Brahmins, nomads, peasants or petty landlords. Hambirrao Mohite was Maratha, Tanhaji Malusare was Koli, Baji Prabhu Deshpande came from a Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhu family, and Ragho Atre was Brahmin, to name but a few. The Narikuravars, a nomadic community which moves from Maharashtra to Tamil Nadu, had been warriors in Shivaji's army. Among his brave captains was Siddi Hilal, a Muslim who hailed from the Bantu people of southeast Africa. Likewise, Shivaji's naval forces liberally employed members of the Koli caste, traditional fishermen-turned-seafaring soldiers. In short, Shivaji's forces drew upon cultivators, craftsmen, tribals, fishermen et al to fill the ranks of a growing war machine.



Strong tradition: A worker cleans Chhatrapati Shivaji's statue at Vile Parle in Mumbai on March 16. PTI

Shivaji's rule was so progressively meritocratic that at the time of his death his Svarājya was defended by two hundred and forty forts and not one of them had a hereditary noble at the helm.

Shivaji also allowed for those who so wished to revert back into Hinduism; Netaji Palekar and Bajaji Nimbalkar are but two examples of the same. This was a full two centuries before the similar Arya Samajist reform. These actions should be understood in light of the similar affront he had caused to the orthodox Brahmins who'd opposed his coronation on account of his unverifiable caste heritage.

Cosme de Guarda in his 1695 work *Life of the Celebrated Sevagy* writes that Shivaji on his deathbed declared that his wives need not be forced to commit sati upon his demise. "I do not, however, like that you should compel any, for I do not require them to come to be burnt by force. I command you to inform them of this, as I expect and wish this courtesy from those who love me most," De Guarda writes, paraphrasing Shivaji's deathbed statements.

During his rule, Shivaji also started projects that sought to replace Persian legalese with Indian ones. In 1677, he sponsored a Sanskrit text known as the Rājavyavahārakośa (Lexicon of Royal Institutes), which provided Sanskrit synonyms for over 1,500 Persian administrative terms. Marathi, in either the Devanāgarī or Mōdī scripts, became both the language of the court as well as of the popular literature of the time. This allowed for ordinary people to both understand the workings of the administration without the need to learn Persian, and also helped revive an otherwise marginalised Indian language.

Shivaji's rule was an affront to the orthodoxy prevalent in the age, and provided dignity and opportunity to all those who came under his *chattr*a (protection) regardless of their caste or creed.

The liberator

Under the rule of Aurangazeb, slavery had been a persistent feature; the Al-Fatawa al-Alamkiriyyah, published in 1672, describes the lawful right of Muslims to purchase, own, and have sexual relations with slaves. The text also made inadmissible all testimony of slaves in a court of law. This did not go unchallenged by Shivaji. During his rule of the Coromandel coast, Shivaji signed a charter to the Dutch banning, freeing, and stopping the import and export of all slaves under his rule. This instruction is with respect to the Dutch establishing trading posts at Porto Novo (Parangipettai, Cuddalore district) and Tevenapatam in present-day Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry. "Under the Moorish reign it had remained lawful for you to buy and transport from here male and female slaves without hindrance from anyone," the charter, signed in August 1677, recounts. "But now, so long as I am master of these lands, you should not buy or transport any men or women as slaves," the charter declares. Reminding slave traders that the practice would not be allowed to continue unimpeded and without consequence, the charter states, "And if you happen to do so and convey them to neighbouring lands, my people will set themselves against it, hinder it in all manner of ways, and will not allow of their [the slaves] being brought back to your factory; this must you observe and fulfil in the prescribed manner."

Shivaji's attitudes towards the feudal structure of his age were just as revolutionary as his attitude towards slavery. Under his rule, taxation and other sources of state revenue were reformed to be more generous to the people at large.

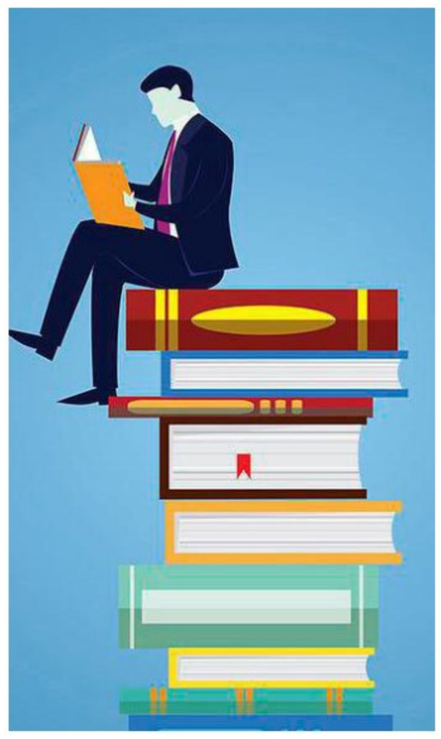
Shivaji abolished the 'vatandari' system, a form of landlordism prevalent in the Deccan during his time, and implemented the Ryotwari system instead. Ryot referred to the cultivator of the land who would be given a greater measure of control over the means of production.

In describing the revenue system of Svarājya, *Sabhasad Bakhar*, the first biography written on Shivaji in 1697, clearly says, "The ryots (peasants or tillers of land) in the country were freed from the yoke of Jamindars. Even if they intended to oppress by exercising their supremacy they could not do so."

The Adnyapatra, a royal edict drafted by Shivaji's Finance Minister Ramchandra Pant Amatya, is blunter when it says, "The Vatandars, etc., in a state are really its enemies. They have not got the mentality to remain content with the rights over lands (Vatan) which they already possess. They have a strong desire to go on acquiring newer and newer (estates), to wax strong, to use that strength in dispossessing others and in carrying on depredations."

It was perhaps these dynamic socio-economic changes that earned Shivaji the moniker *Shakakarta*, or epoch maker, during his rule.

This is the first of a two-part series on Shivaji's reign.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know Your English

K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran

"How good is Saritha in Chemistry?"

"Well, if you ask me, she isn't nearly as good as you are."

"Does that mean she is almost as good as I am?"

"No, it doesn't. It means there's a big difference between the two of you. You're much better than her."

"Thank you."

"Here's another example. If I say, Govinda isn't nearly as tall as Amitabh, it means there's a big difference between the two...."

" ...that Govinda is much shorter than Amitabh. Is that what you mean?"

"Exactly."

"But what if the difference was small? What would you say then?"

"Well, in that case, you would use 'quite as'. For example, Ananya isn't quite as fast as Achala."

"Meaning, Ananya is a little slower than Achala?"

"Right again!"

"So if I say, the movie wasn't quite as good as the book, it means...."

"....the book was a little better than the movie. But if both were equally good, then you would say, the movie was just as good as the book."

"Many people think that Brian Lara is just as good as Tendulkar."

"Many people in India would disagree with that."

"That's true. Are you getting your hair cut today?"

"I can't. All the shops are closed today."

"But why?"

"Haven't you heard? Our local MLA kicked the bucket today and..."

"....he did! I didn't know that! But tell me, how did 'kick the bucket' come to mean 'to die'?"

"There are several explanations for that."

"Just give me one."

"O.K. In the old days people used to commit suicide using the bucket."

"You're joking, right?"

"No. I'm not. You see, when a man wanted to hang himself, he used to tie a rope to a tree or whatever. Then, he used to turn a bucket upside down and stand on it. After that, he put the noose around his neck and...."

"....kicked the bucket away!"

"And when he did that, he died. Nowadays, of course, people use either a chair or a stool to hang themselves. But in those days, not everyone had a chair. But everyone had a bucket."

"And boy, did they kick it!"

Published in The Hindu on December 26, 1995.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Here is a quiz on everything that happened on April 2

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1
The Bishop of Rome and head of the Roman Catholic Church from 1978, who was the first non-Italian pope in 455 years and the first from a Slavic country, died on this day in 2005. Who was he?

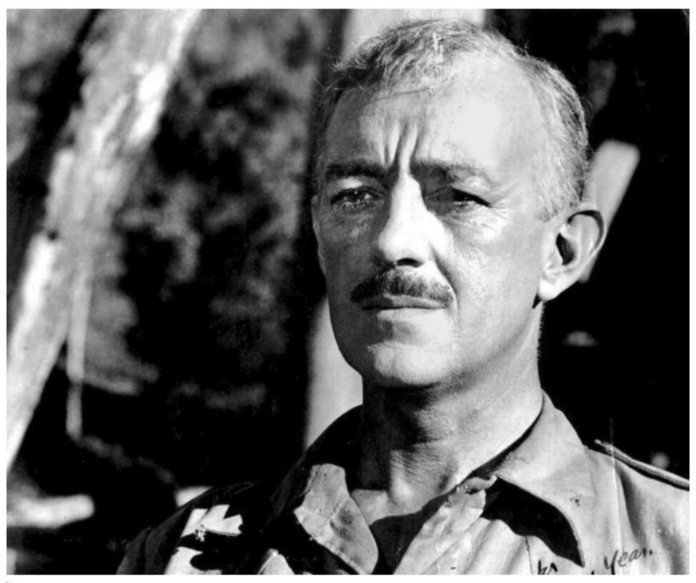
QUESTION 2
This international Portuguese filmmaker died on this day in 2015. He is known for his film *Past and Present*. Who was he?

QUESTION 3
This crime boss was convicted on 13 criminal counts —including the murder of Paul Castellano and others, racketeering, and obstruction of justice — and was sentenced to life in prison on this day in 1992. Name him.

QUESTION 4
This soap opera debuted as a five-part miniseries on American television. The series revolved around an affluent and feuding Texas family, the Ewings, who owned the independent oil company Ewing Oil. Name the show.

QUESTION 5
This movie had its world premiere in Washington, D.C. in 1968; it became a classic, setting the benchmark for sci-fi films. It was directed by Stanley Kubrick. Name the film.

QUESTION 6
This German sculptor and painter who was a leading advocate of irrationality in art, was born on this day in 1891. He was one of the primary pioneers of the Dada movement and surrealism in Europe. Identify the artist.



Visual question:
Identify this British actor who was born on this day in 1914.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Name the Hindi movie released in 2016 that had to move Bombay High Court against cuts ordered by the Censor Board. **Ans: *Udta Punjab***

2. This movie directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali had to tweak its title. **Ans: *Padmaavat***

3. This Malayalam movie by Sanal Kumar Sasidharan had to tweak its title. **Ans: *S Durga***

4. This Hindi movie was initially titled Jaffna, but was later changed to avoid direct references. **Ans: *Madras Cafe***

5. The I&B Ministry blocked this two-part documentary from social media. **Ans: *India: the Modi Question***

Visual: Makers of this Irrfan Khan-starrer removed one word from its title. **Ans: *Billu***

Early Birds: Parimal Das| Mohan Lal Patel| Arun Kumar Singh| Anju Sharma| Kshitij Kumar

Word of the day

Wend:
direct one's course or way

Synonyms: move, travel

Usage: *We wended through the narrow streets.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/wendpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ʊɛnt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

HC refuses to interfere with metro fare hike

It is not the domain of the court to delve into such aspects which are to be better considered by the fare fixation committee constituted under the statute, says Division Bench

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Refusing to interfere with the decision to increase the fares of metro services by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited, the High Court of Karnataka on Tuesday dismissed a PIL petition, which had claimed that the fare hike is a violation of 'breach of promise' as it exceeded the 'promised' limit.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice N.V. Anjaria and Justice K.V. Aravind passed the order while rejecting the petition filed by Sanath Kumar Shetty and others of Bengaluru.

The petitioners had contended that fare structure is irrational, as it does not adhere to the station-to-station model, and violates Section 33 of Metro Rail (Operation and Maintenance), Act, 2002. The petitioners had also claimed that 'principle of promissory estoppel' has been violated as the BMRCL initially proposed a fare revision of around 15-25% but later increased it by 71% depriving the public of an opportunity to raise objection.

A file photo of metro commuters waiting to buy tickets..

"The fare fixation is an expert exercise where a host of considerations would have applied, including technical and financial considerations. It is not the domain of the court to delve into such aspects which are to be better considered by the fare fixation committee constituted under the statute," the Bench observed.

Also, the Bench said that the arguments of "breach of promissory estoppel or doctrine of legitimate expectation hardly have any legs to stand... the circumstances of the case suggest that there is any breach of legitimate expectation merely because the petitioners made a representation that the fair should not be increased beyond a particular level and that is not done".

Metro extends services for IPL matches

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has announced the extension of Namma Metro services during the Tata Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 matches scheduled to be held in Bengaluru.

Services will be extended on match days, which are April 2, 10, 18, and 24, as well as May 3, 13, and 17. The last trains from all four terminal stations – Whitefield (Kadugodi), Challaghatta, Silk Institute, and Madavara – will depart at 12.30 a.m. Additionally, the last train from Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Station Majestic towards all four directions will leave at 1.15 a.m.

The city's traffic police have issued an advisory regarding parking restrictions and diversions for the upcoming IPL 2025 matches at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. The restrictions will be in place from 3 p.m. to midnight on match days.

Parking will not be allowed on key roads, including Queens Road, M.G. Road, Raj Bhavan Road, Kasturba Road, Vittal Mallya Road, and others in the vicinity of the stadium.

Partial relief for commuters on Kensington Road

Chandan M. Naik
Raghav H.S.
BENGALURU

The one-way stretch till Madras Sappers along Kensington Road, which connects to Ulsoor lake, will be functional on April 10. The ongoing white-topping project, which began one-and-a-half months ago, has caused significant disruptions for daily commuters and local businesses alike, forcing them to seek alternative routes and endure longer travel times while increasing traffic congestion on surrounding roads.

"The white-topping project from Old Madras Road to Vinayaka temple has been completed, and we are currently allowing it to cure, which is a crucial step. After 10 days, we will open it to motorists. Additionally, we have started work on the next stretch of the road," said a BBMP official.

"We commenced the project in February and aim to complete the double-road white-topping by the end of May. To minimise inconvenience for residents, we reopened the road to two-wheelers after a three-day curing process. Barricades have been installed, and residents were informed about the construction in advance. The road will be functional from April 10 for commuters," said Mohammad Azharuddin, project engineer of the company executing the work.

The ongoing white-topping work, which began one-and-a-half months ago, has caused significant disruptions for daily commuters and local businesses alike. K. MURALI KUMAR

Commuters and residents are partially relieved. "The road connects Old Madras Road to other eastern and northern parts of the city, and commuters are being forced to take a detour through M.G. Road, which is already congested," said Nataraj an auto driver.

Prem Kumar, a local resident, said: "The construction has disrupted our routines. We have to park our vehicles at a distance. School buses were also struggling to pick up children."

Local businesses have also felt the brunt of the ongoing construction, "The footfall to my shop has decreased. Most people who come here are only asking for directions or alternative routes," said Venkatesh, a shop owner near Kensington Road.

IISc researchers develop technique to repair space bricks in lunar habitats

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have developed a bacteria-based technique to repair bricks that can be used to build lunar habitats, if they get damaged in the moon's harsh environment.

According to IISc., future lunar expeditions are no longer planned as just flyby missions. NASA's Artemis programme, for example, seeks to set up a permanent habitat on the moon. To cut costs, instead of carrying material from Earth, astronauts would need to use the abundantly available lunar soil, or 'regolith' - a complex mixture of broken minerals and rocks - to build structures on site.

A few years ago, researchers at the Department of Mechanical Engineering (ME), IISc., developed a technique that uses a soil bacterium called *sporosarcina pasteurii* to build bricks out of lunar and Martian soil simulants.

The bacterium converts urea and calcium into calcium carbonate crystals that, along with guar gum, glue the soil particles together to create brick-like materials. This process is an eco-friendly and low-cost alternative to using cement.

Subsequently, the team also explored sintering - heating a compacted mixture of soil simulant and a polymer called polyvinyl alcohol to very high temperatures - to create much stronger bricks.

"It's one of the classical ways of making bricks. It makes bricks of very high strength, more than adequate even for regular housing," said Aloke Kumar, Associate Professor in the Department of ME and corresponding author of the study.

IISc said that though sintering is an easily scalable process, as multiple bricks can be made at once in a furnace, the lunar surface is extremely harsh (temperatures can swing from 121°C to -133°C in a single day), and it is constantly bombarded by solar winds and meteorites.

This can cause cracks in these bricks, weakening structures built using them.

"Temperature changes can be much more dramatic on the lunar surface, which can, over a period of time, have a significant effect. Sintered bricks are brittle. If you have a crack and it grows, the entire structure can quickly fall apart," said co-author Koushik Viswanathan, Associate Professor.

To solve this problem, the team once again turned to bacteria. In a new study, they created different types of artificial defects in sintered bricks and poured a slurry made from *sporosarcina pasteurii*, guar gum, and lunar soil simulant into them.

Rare copper plates documenting coronation of Devaraya I unveiled

Chandan M. Naik
BENGALURU

A set of copper plates dating back to early 15th Century from the reign of Devaraya I of the Sangama Dynasty were unveiled here on Tuesday by Falcon Coins Gallery with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). These copper plates, belonging to the Vijayanagara Empire, written in Sanskrit and Kannada and Nāgarī characters, are unique as they were issued during the coronation of King Devaraya I. Notably, the seal features an image of Vamana instead of the customary Varaha, the royal insignia of the Vijayanagara Empire, said the organisers.

The copper plates are dated Saka 1328 (Nāga-Chakshu-Guna Sasi), Vyaya, Kārtika ba. Daśami (10), Friday, corresponding to November 5, 1406 CE, which provide a detailed genealogy of the Sangama Dynasty.

The set of rare copper plates that were unveiled in Bengaluru on Tuesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

They trace the lineage from Chandra, Yadu, and Sangama to his five sons: Harihara, Kampa, Bukka, Mārapa, and Muddapa, explained, K. M. Reddy, Director (Epigraphy) at ASI. He emphasised their historical significance, stating, "These copper plates are extremely important as they offer authentic information about our history, being directly issued by the kings." He added that the plates confirm the previously unverified coronation date of Devaraya I, with the grant issued during the ongoing ceremony.

According to S. Nagarajappa, Deputy Superintending Epigraphist at ASI, the plates record that King Devaraya I, son of Harihara, granted the village of Gudipalli – along with two hamlets, Rājēndramāda and Udayapalli – during his coronation.

The village was renamed Devarāyapura-agrahāra and divided into 61 shares distributed among several Brahmins of various gotras and sutras, well-versed in the Vedas and shastras. The allocation included 26.5 shares to Rigvedins, 29.5 shares to Yajurvedins, three shares to Shukla-Yajurvedins, and two shares as Dēvabhāga to Somanatha (Shiva) and Janardhana. The grant's boundaries, situated in Mulbāgil rājya, Hodēnādasthala, are detailed in the Kannada language.

The copper plates surfaced through a coin collection acquired by Falcon Coins Gallery. Kirti M. Parekh, Managing Director of Falcon Coins Gallery, explained, "A person approached us, claiming the plates belonged to his grandfather and offered to sell them. This copper plate is significant as it sheds light on the Vijayanagara Empire and its history."

Hardik Parekh, Manager at Falcon Coins Gallery, added that upon discovering the plates, they immediately informed the ASI, which took imprints for study. He noted that this is the first known coronation copper plate to emerge, alongside two others from the Maitraka Dynasty (found in Junagadh, Gujarat) and the Ganga Dynasty (found in Talakadu, Karnataka), which remain undeciphered.

K.M. Reddy highlighted ASI's efforts to preserve such artefacts, stating, "ASI is spreading awareness among people and doing everything necessary to protect and preserve ancient inscriptions and sealings."

DKS urges Rajnath Singh to confer Bharat Ratna on late seer

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar greeting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at the 118th birth anniversary celebrations of Shivakumar Swami of Siddaganga Mutt near Tumakuru on Tuesday.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday appealed to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh that the Centre should confer the Bharat Ratna on the late seer Shivakumara Swami of Siddaganga Mutt for his contribution to society.

"The late seer has given *anna*, *akshara*, and *ashraya* (food, education, and shelter) to lakhs of people. The Centre must consider him for the Bharat Ratna," he appealed to the Defence Minister at a function organised at Siddaganga Mutt to celebrate the 118th birth anniversary of the seer.

"I appeal to the Defence Minister to bring this to the attention of the Prime Minister. This is an appeal from the people of Karnataka and the government of Karnataka. Shivakumara Swami has given many achievers to this society," he said.

Timings
BENGALURU

WEDNESDAY, APR. 02	
RISE 06:15	SET 18:31
RISE 09:18	SET 22:43
THURSDAY, APR. 03	
RISE 06:14	SET 18:31
RISE 10:17	SET 23:47
FRIDAY, APR. 04	
RISE 06:14	SET 18:31
RISE 11:19	SET 00:00

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	23
Mysuru	35	20
Bengaluru	34	21

Bengaluru Today
35°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Dry weather to prevail.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
35°C The weather will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds may occur.

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THE HINDU
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THE HINDU
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The above vacancies were already been published in the Employment News/ Rozgar Samachar dated 01 March, 2025 - 07 March, 2025 vide EN No. 48/24, 48/25, 48/26. The last date for receipt of application is within 60 days from the next day after the date of publication in the the Employment News/ Rozgar Samachar.

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A BG-BGE

Cabinet rejig, filling Council seats likely to top CM's agenda in Delhi

The State Cabinet has not been reshuffled since the formation of the government in May 2023, and many senior legislators who have not been accommodated in the Ministry are lobbying hard; four vacancies need to be filled in the Upper House

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who will leave for Delhi on Wednesday along with his Cabinet colleagues to inaugurate the newly constructed Karnataka Bhavan building 'Kaveri', will hold meetings with the Congress top brass amid speculation of the State Cabinet reshuffle.

During talks with the high command, the CM is expected to finalise candidates for the four vacancies in the State Legislative Council and the demand of a section of the party leaders on the replacement of Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president. The State Cabinet has not been reshuffled since the formation of the government in May 2023. Several senior legislators, who have not been accommodated in the Ministry, have been lobbying with the high command for their inclusion in the Cabinet by dropping the "poor" performers.

A file photo of AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge having a meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Multiple aspirants

During talks with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday, Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar are also expected to finalise candidates to fill the four vacant seats in the Legislative Council. More than two dozen aspirants, including journalists and veteran party leaders, have been lobbying for the seats.

Mr. Siddaramaiah, who has not visited the national capital for a couple of months owing to health issues, is expected to explain the necessity of continuing him in his post to provide political stability as the party is bracing for elections to rural and urban local bodies.

One-to-one meeting

During the one-to-one meeting with Mr. Gandhi, the Chief Minister is expected to explain issues related to the honey-trap case raised by Minister K.N. Rajanna in the Legislative Assembly, the gold smuggling case involving the stepdaughter of an IPS officer, and the quota provided to Muslims in the civil contract works.

Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi and Social Welfare H.C. Mahadevappa too are expected to hold talks with Mr. Kharge, Mr. Gandhi, and AICC general secretaries K.C. Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala and are expected to raise the issue related to change of KPCC president.

For the last few months, loyalists of the Chief Minister have been demanding the replacement of Mr. Shivakumar and this has not gone well with the latter. The loyalists are also likely to propose the creation of two more posts of Deputy Chief Minister.

On Wednesday evening, Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar, Ministers and Union Ministers from Karnataka and MPs from the State would take part in the inauguration of the Karnataka Bhavan building 'Kaveri' at Chanakyapuri in Delhi.

Worth ₹140 crore

The project, first approved in 2019, witnessed its cost escalate to approximately ₹140 crore under successive State governments. The new structure replaces the 50-year-old Karnataka Bhavan building that was declared unsafe by the New Delhi Municipal Council. The 'Kaveri' building features exclusive suites for the State's Governor, the Chief Minister, the Karnataka High Court Chief Justice, and other VVIPs.

Yatnal supporters to seek help of Lingayat, other religious leaders

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI/ BELAGAVI

Even before the dust raised by the expulsion of self-proclaimed 'Hindu tiger' Basanagouda Patil Yatnal from the dissidence-ridden Karnataka unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could settle, the rift slowly seems to be turning into a fight for the 'real Lingayat leader' tag.

On Tuesday, Ramesh Jarkiholi, former Minister and BJP MLA, announced that supporters of Mr. Yatnal would seek the support of religious leaders, mainly of Lingayat sects, to urge the BJP to withdraw his expulsion from the party. Mr. Jarkiholi is part of the camp, along with Mr. Yatnal, opposed to BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra.

"I am confident that Mr. Yatnal's expulsion will be cancelled and he will be readmitted. He will not form a new party," Mr. Jarkiholi told reporters in Belagavi.

Mr. Yatnal had earlier hinted that he might be toying with the idea of forming a new party.

"A team of leaders, including Mr. Yatnal, will visit Lingayat mutts, while another team, including

A file photo of Ramesh Jarkiholi and Basanagouda Patil Yatnal

Ramesh Jarkiholi says seers' help will be sought to get the BJP to withdraw the expulsion of the senior MLA

me, Arvind Limbavali, and Kumar Bangarappa, will visit SC/ST and OBC community mutts," he said. A decision in this regard was taken at a meeting in Bengaluru, he added. The leaders had advised Mr. Yatnal not to criticise any BJP leader, said Mr. Jarkiholi.

Plans on convention

It may be recalled that in March, former Minister M.P. Renukacharya had made an announcement on holding a convention of all sub sects of Veerashaiva-Lingayat community in support of Mr. Vijayendra in Davanagere. He had even announced that the objective of the convention would be to make Mr. Vijayendra the next Chief Minister of Karnataka. He had said that Mr. Yatnal was making futile efforts to project himself a Veerashaiva Lingayat leader. He had ridiculed Mr. Yatnal for donning the roles of 'Hindu Huli', 'Veerashaiva Lingayat leader' or 'Panchamasali leader' based on circumstances.

To counter it, days later, the Yatnal faction had come out with announcement on holding a Hindu convention in Davanagere itself. Although both the conventions did not materialise, post expulsion, the Yatnal camp is making efforts to project it as "an injustice to a Lingayat leader", particularly of the Panchamasali Lingayat community.

Lingayat Panchamasali seer Basava Jaya Mruthyunjaya Swami has already given a call for the community members to stand in support of Mr. Yatnal.

However, this has not gone down well with Panchamasali leaders like Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar, who has already taken exception to it.

Police probe 'murder conspiracy' against MLC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Police officials have intensified their investigation into an alleged plot to kill MLC R. Rajendra, son of Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna, following the emergence of an 18-minute audio clip detailing the 'conspiracy'.

Woman detained

The recording, which surfaced on media platforms, has led to the detention of a woman for questioning.

Mr. Rajendra lodged a formal complaint with the Tumakuru Superintendent of Police after receiving a pen drive containing the audio file. The recording, reportedly from December last year, captures the conversation between Rocky, a close associate of Rajendra, and Soman, the prime accused in the case.

Assassination plan

According to official sources, the leaked audio features Pushpa, an associate of Soman, disclosing the assassination plan.

Following Mr. Rajendra's complaint, the police launched an investigation and registered cases against Soman, Bharat, Amit, Gunda, and Yatheesh under multiple charges. With Pushpa now in custody, officials are interrogating her to uncover additional information regarding the alleged conspiracy, sources said.

CM requests Maharashtra to release water to meet drinking water needs of north Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has appealed to his counterpart in Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis to release of water from Wama/Koyna reservoir to Krishna river and from Ujjani reservoir to Bhima river to meet the drinking water needs of the people in districts of Belagavi, Vijayapura, Bagalkot, Kalaburagi, Yadgir and Raichur in north Karnataka.

The Chief Minister requested Mr. Fadnavis to direct the concerned authorities to release at least 2 tmc ft of water from Warna/Koyna reservoir to Krishna river and 1 tmc ft of water from Ujjini Reservoir to Bhima river to meet the immediate drinking water needs of both human beings and livestock of northern districts of Karnataka.

Severe shortage

These districts have been facing severe shortage of drinking water since the beginning of March. On earlier occasions, during the summer seasons, the Maharashtra government had responded positively on the release of water from the Krishna to meet the drinking water needs of people and livestock, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, and thanked the Maharashtra CM.

On the current situation, the Karnataka Chief Minister said, "The situation is becoming more critical with the rising temperatures and the existing storage levels in the Hippargi Barrage and other local reservoirs are insufficient to cater to the drinking water needs of North Karnataka districts of Krishna Basin until the onset of the monsoon season in 2025."

High Court stays FIR against Yatnal on his remarks against Ranya Rao

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Tuesday stayed further proceedings based on the First Information Report (FIR) registered against Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal for allegedly outraging modesty of Kannada actor Ranya Rao, who was arrested in connection with a gold smuggling case, through his derogatory statements made before the media.

Justice Pradeep Singh Yerur passed the interim order on a petition filed by Mr. Yatnal, who has questioned the FIR registered by the High Grounds police in Bengaluru based on a complaint lodged by one Akula Anuradha. The FIR was registered on March 18 under Section 79 (outraging the modesty of a woman) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Not authorised

It has been contended in Mr. Yatnal's petition that the complainant was not authorised by Ms. Ranya to lodge the complaint on her behalf. Pointing out that his statement, which is in the public domain, implied that he was insisting on plugging the loopholes in the system to prevent smuggling of gold by hiding the same in the bodies of the passengers, and did not in any way outrage the modesty of women.

The statement made in the kind of Kannada often spoken in the northern part of Karnataka, is rustic and at first blush appears offensive. However, there was no intention of outraging the modesty of the accused person allegedly involved in gold smuggling, the petition claims.

Names of Ministers

Contending that complainant was setup with sole intent to discourage the petitioner from disclosing the names of two Ministers as the petitioner had given a statement that he would disclose the names on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. It has also been contended in the petition that Section 79 of the BNS is not applicable to the facts of the case.

BSY to take part in BJP protest against price rise

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP party veteran B.S. Yediyurappa announced that he would participate in the BJP's day-and-night protest in Bengaluru on Wednesday, adding that common people were finding it 'suffocating' to lead their lives in Karnataka under the Congress regime due to the sharp increase in prices of various essential commodities and services.

"The prices of milk, power tariffs and various service charges including stamp duty and guidance value have gone up. Garbage cess too has been slapped in Bengaluru while the cost of energising the irrigation pump sets has gone up," Mr. Yediyurappa told mediapersons in Bengaluru. He urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to roll back the hikes.

He further alleged that shadow boxing was going on for the Chief Minister's post in the ruling Congress. "They are more bothered about the Chief Minister's post than people's problems," he said. He declared that the BJP would take up a serious campaign against the price rise.

Ashok appeals to Speaker to revoke 18 MLAs' suspension

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

R. Ashok

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok has made a fresh appeal to Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader to revoke the suspension of 18 MLAs belonging to the BJP so that they can continue to discharge their duties. In a letter to the Speaker, Mr. Ashok termed the suspension 'harsh' and said it had imposed several restrictions on the legislators that would come in the way of discharging of their duties.

It may be noted that 18 MLAs belonging to the BJP have been suspended for six months from the House on the charge of disrespecting the Speaker and his position by throwing paper pieces at him during a protest in the Assembly with respect to the charges of organised honey-trapping and providing reservation to Muslims in awarding contracts for public works.

Making it clear that their protest was neither intentional nor directed at the Speaker, Mr. Ashok said the protesting members would have offered their clarification had the Speaker had called them to his chamber to seek an explanation.

He said the BJP was appealing to revoke the suspension.

KSDL records net profit of ₹415 crore

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

The State-run Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Ltd. (KSDL), which has diversified its portfolio by launching a variety of soap and perfume products, recorded a net profit of ₹415 crore in 2024-25 and registered a growth of 14%. The 109-year-old PSU had a targeted turnover of ₹1,589 crore, but achieved business of ₹1,785.99 crore in 2024-25.

Over six years

The KSDL, with its flagship brand Mysore Sandal Soap, increased its profit close to four times during the last six years – from ₹109.02 crore in 2018-19 to ₹415 crore in 2024-25, said the company. The company paid a dividend of ₹108.62 crore to the government in December 2024.

Mysore Sandal Soap is a flagship product of KSDL.

Minister for Large Industries M.B. Patil and KSDL chairman Appaji C.S. Nadagouda, MLA, cleared proposals on launching multiple products during the last one year, said officials. The KSDL's annual production of all quantities during 2024-25 was recorded at 43,144.29 tonnes as against 37,916 tonnes in 2023-24, marking a growth of 13.78%.

During 2024-25, the toilet soap division recorded a production of 36,268.5 tonnes, while the detergent plant production stood at 5,788.02 tonnes. Cosmetic plant's production was 1,087.678 tonnes, according to KSDL managing director Prashanth P.K.M.

On the rise

Year	Profit (in ₹ crore)
2018-19	109.02
2019-20	109.66
2020-21	113.93
2021-22	137.87
2022-23	182.49
2023-24	362.07
2024-25	415

Source: KSDL

A few months ago, the KSDL opened two outlets at the KSRTC bus terminal at Majestic in Bengaluru. Currently, the company has its outlets in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Shivamogga, Chitradurga, and Belagavi and they are managed by the KSDL Society. It plans to set up more stalls in all district headquarters. The KSDL has planned to set up outlets at railway stations under the 'One Station, One Product' initiative of the Indian Railways. The company has planned to appoint new distributors across India, especially in north India.

Soap Mela

The KSDL has been organising 'Soap Mela' in the district headquarters to boost its sales and create awareness among the public on the availability of its products.

It has held exhibitions in Tumakuru and Davangere. Customers are provided a 10% discount on the prices of products at the exhibition.

BEL achieves turnover of ₹23,000 crore in financial year 2024-25

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has achieved a turnover of around ₹23,000 core (provisional and unaudited), during the financial year 2024-25, against the previous year's turnover of ₹19,820 crore registering a growth of 16%.

This includes export sales of around $106 million during FY 2024-25, as against the previous year's export turnover of $92.98 million, registering a growth of 14%.

In the fiscal year 2024-25, BEL secured orders worth ₹18,715 core. Some of the major orders received during the year are BMP II Upgrade, Ashwini Radar, Software Defined Radios, Data link, Multi-Function Radars, EON 51, Seekers, Anti Drone System, Airport Surveillance Radar, Sonar Upgradation, Flycatcher spares, Radar upgradation, Spares and Services, etc, and other projects in non-Defence sector.

The PSU said that with this, the total Order Book of BEL as on April 1, 2025, stands at around ₹71,650 crore, including export order book of $359 million.

Manoj Jain, Chairman and Managing Director, BEL, said, "BEL strives to attain self-reliance through enhanced indigenisation efforts, expansion and modernisation, outsourcing to Indian Industries including MSMEs and Start-ups. BEL has rolled out strategies to maximise its global outreach and footprint in international market segments in the coming years. All these efforts will help BEL retain its market leadership position in the Strategic Electronics sector."

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

IN MEMORIAM

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

Dr.P.N.PARAMESWARAN
23rd ANNIVERSARY DAY
29.10.1950 02.04.2002
You were what you believed and you inspired all to believe in themselves.
Fondly Remembered by
FAMILY MEMBERS & STAFF OF
DEVI ACADEMY SR. SEC. SCHOOL
CHENNAI - 600 087

IN FOND MEMORY OF
Late D. ANNALAKSHMI AMMAL
(Wife of Late V.S.K.D. NADAR)

THIRTY FIRST ANNIVERSARY
02.04.2025
Ever Loving
D.ANANDA RAJAN'S
Family Members
D.MANOHARA RAJAN
& Family Members
D.GUNASEELA RAJAN
& Family Members

A BG-BGE

Green future: Revisiting the marginalised lives of Challakere and Pavagada

'While clean energy is inevitable for a sustainable future, what shouldn't be ignored is the unequal distribution of burden of climate action on the poor and marginalised of India'

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

An aerial view shows a shepherd walking past photovoltaic cell solar panels in the Pavagada Solar Park in Kyataganacharulu village, Karnataka. GETTY IMAGES

In the 13,000 acres of Pavagada solar park, only 2,000 are employed out of whom very few are from the region. The jobs offered are of security guards, cleaners and so on. GETTY IMAGES

In Challakere, weaving used to be not just a major form of livelihood but an integral part of the socio-cultural life of the community. Challakere kamblis, a type of water-resistant blankets made from wool, is significant to the locals for every occasion from cradle to grave. Newborn babies are placed on a Challakere kambli, brides are gifted kamblis and sheep, the dear departed are sent off with a piece of the kambli. One of the biggest customers of the water-resistant blankets, used in both monsoons and winters, was the Indian Army.

The once thriving industry is, today, a mere shadow of its past. The government took over 13,000 acres of the grasslands of Challakere to build Science City, cutting off the villagers' access to water and land to graze sheep and cattle. Buying fodder was too expensive for most villagers resulting in distress sale of the sheep and the decline of a local industry.

Net-zero target

With a goal of becoming a net-zero nation by 2070 and achieving 500GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity by 2030, India's climate objectives are tall. The country witnessed a 2x increase in solar installations in 2024 compared to the previous year. There has been an increased push towards renewable energy making India one of the fastest growing renewable energy markets.

While clean energy is inevitable for a clean future, what shouldn't be ignored is the unequal distribution of burdens of climate action on the poor and marginalised of rural India, argues Bhargavi S. Rao, educator, researcher and former trustee at Environment Support Group (ESG). Speaking recently at Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, she highlighted the land diversions or 'green grabbing' in Pavagada, Challakere and Chamrajnagar in Karnataka, where farming communities have been displaced and dispossessed in the name of development.

Science City

"Renewable energy projects are very land intensive. Today renewable energy policies seem to be determining how land will be diverted to create these new forms of energy production," Rao said.

It was in 2009 that the government started taking over around 10,000 acres of contiguous grassland in Challakere for building science city. Part of the commons, the grasslands or *kavals* were ecologically, historically, culturally and economically significant. These vast lands were set aside by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in the 18th century for the strong, fast and highly drought-tolerant Amrit Mahal cattle rendering it the name Amrit Mahal kavals.

A document by ESG notes how the *Kavalgara* (Kaval protector) of these lands ensured that the Amrit Mahal breeds got the first right of grazing in the post-monsoon period, a tradition that continued in the post-independence period as well. The pastures were then opened for other cattle breeds, goat and sheep owned by local communities.

In 1969 it was given district forest status. Protected through centuries, the grasslands remained critical for pastoral and agrarian communities in the locality and for a wide variety of flora and fauna including the critically endangered great Indian bustard.

Unilateral takeover

The takeover of the kavals by the government with barely any consultation with the locals or the panchayat authorities upended all of it.

"Challakere got divided like a piece of cake," Rao says.

The grasslands got allocated to ISRO, DRDO, BARC, IISc, KSSIDc and private company named Sagitaur Ventures.

The high walls of the science city blocked off the *kavals* from the people in the 70 surrounding villages who not only used the commons to graze their cattle, but also to collect firewood, fruits, tubers and palm leaves.

ESG filed a case in 2013 at the National Green Tribunal which gave specific directions to each of the organisations in the region and asked the government of Karnataka to come out with a state action plan for the Great Indian Buster and to protect the remaining grasslands.

"It particularly told the Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change to revisit the decision to remove solar parks from the purview of environmental clearance. It directed DRDO to ensure water supply for the local communities. To BARC, it had given a direction saying that it has to consult with the local people and make way for them to take their animals across. NGT also said that none of these agencies can break down the places of worship," Rao explained to *The Hindu*.

According to her, after the initial few months of compliance, the agencies continued building the wall and limiting the access of the villages leaving only a very narrow path making it practically impossible to pass with huge herds of livestock. Nor did MoEF and CC act on the suggestions of NGT. This became a precedent for future land diversions.

"Challakere which was the largest grassland ever in Central Karnataka, is now gone," says Rao.

"In the 3,000 acres that were protected by the NGT you can see that a private foundation is planting saplings of trees with the help of the Forest Department."

Pavagada Solar Park

The works of solar park in Pavagada began in 2016. "The way land got diverted in Pavagada is very interesting," says Rao.

No consultation with the panchayat or local authorities was held. Instead, Rao notes, retired government officials were hired to visit the houses in five villages in the region and persuade people to lease out their lands for the solar park. The consent was not free, prior and informed. The promises included jobs in return and revenue from the land.

"The amount that they are getting here for the land is just ₹21,000 rupees per acre per year," Rao notes.

A large chunk of the 13,000 acres came from small and marginal farmers. While Pavagada is mostly a dry and arid region, having the land to themselves meant the farmers could use it in emergency situations, as collateral for a loan or to grow ragi or chillies during a spell of rain.

"They grew jackfruit and tamarind trees on these farms which became additional sources of income. They could graze their own animals on it. But once the land was given away, they lost access to the land."

Leasing the farm to the solar park meant the land was locked away for 28 years. As the land was levelled, trees went away. The socio-economic implications didn't stop with that. With livelihoods affected, youngsters migrated to cities. Parents started pulling their girl children out of schools as going to school meant crossing the huge solar parks that have barely any human presence.

"Child marriage has started in Pavagada. Trafficking too, both for labour and otherwise," says Rao.

The job myth

Often, the promises touted by the renewable energy push not only include a green future, but also more jobs for the locals. But on the ground, the reality seems to be different.

Rao, who visited Pavagada in December, points out that in the 13,000 acres of Pavagada solar park, only 2,000 are employed out of whom very few are from the region. The jobs offered are of security guards, cleaners and so on.

"When the park started, women were employed for de-weeding, wiping and cleaning the panels and so on. But today, everything is automated. They have lawnmowers. They don't need anybody to sit and cut the grass anymore," she says.

When it comes to skill development and training, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has introduced programmes such as Suryamitra, Varunmitra and Vayumitra to train Solar PV, solar water pumping systems and wind power technicians respectively. While the programmes look promising in creating a workforce in the renewable sector, Rao notes that skill trainings happen rarely in rural areas.

There isn't the safety net of traditional livelihoods such as sheep and cattle rearing and weaving to fall back on to as they are being wiped out. The result is a huge outflux of people from these regions to places like Bengaluru where they seek jobs in informal sectors such as construction or platform-based gig works.

Yet another serious issue is the breakage of solar panels and wind blades that are piling up inside the facilities with the potential to turn the lands into toxic hotspots in the future in the absence of mechanisms to deal with it.

While there is no denying that renewable energy is going to be and needs to be an integral part of our future, what needs to be an integral part of it is the devolution of power to villages.

"Local communities should be part of the decision-making, and they should be able to negotiate better if we are replicating the Pavagada model. If only we help every village to imagine its energy needs and put up their own rooftops, their own agro photovoltaic, their own windmills... those decisions need to come ground up," says Rao, who fears the top-down approach would push a large section into irreversible intergenerational poverty.

"If we are thinking about addressing climate change on one hand and also making these shifts, there needs to be a much more logical way of thinking while building the renewable energy installations," Rao says.

Focus on women

Ways to allow animals to graze and skill training with special focus on women also form part of her suggestions.

"While we try to solve one climate change problem, we seem to be forgetting the fact that there was a large section of society neither connected to the grid nor producing any emissions. They are at a disadvantage at the intersection of caste, class, education and language. While creating solar parks and renewable energy, instead of being completely pushed to the edge, what they need if handholding and further strengthening of their skills."

Waste management company raises ₹6 cr. in pre-series A funding

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Hasiru Dala Innovations (HDI), a waste management company dedicated to inclusive circularity, has raised ₹6 crore in a pre-series A equity funding round. The round was led by Rainmatter Fintech Investments. Next Bharat Ventures IFSC, a Suzuki-backed alternative investment firm, made its first direct portfolio investment with its contribution to HDI.

Operational efficiancy

"The capital infusion will accelerate HDI's growth in key areas, including scaling its plastics circularity business to increase recycling capacity and operational efficiency. It will also support the expansion of its Bio-gas plant through its joint venture with Carbon Masters, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable waste-to-energy solutions," said a press release from the company.

Nithin Kamat, CEO, Zerodha and Rainmatter, speaking on the investment, stated, "Hasiru Dala Innovations has built a unique, inclusive model that not only tackles waste management but also empowers waste pickers as key stakeholders in the circular economy. Their work in plastics circularity and bio-energy solutions is creating tangible environmental and social impact."

With ongoing efforts, HDI has successfully diverted over 100,000 tons of municipal solid waste away from landfills, conserving approximately one million cubic meters of landfill space and mitigating 1,31,493 tCO2e greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Shekar Prabhakar, CEO & Cofounder of Hasiru Dala Innovations, said on the recent investments, "At Hasiru Dala Innovations, our mission has always been to create a world with no waste and no waste pickers–where those who have been traditionally marginalized are at the forefront of the circular economy. Beyond livelihood opportunities, we are focused on driving systemic change, with over 40 informal waste sector suppliers now adopting fair trade practices."

Dutch delegation expresses interest in AI-powered health technology

The delegtaion expresses interest in innovations in pharmaceuticals with AI in drug development and discovery, and remote monitoring and telehealth-related solutions

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Dutch delegation led by its Vice Minister of Health, Curative Care, Barbara Goezinne,recently expressed interest in the deployment of a few selected advanced-stage India and Karnataka-based AI health tech in the Netherlands.

Ms. Goezinne, who met Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) on recently said, "We are committed to work together in the field of medical technology, particularly in the development of innovative, labour-saving medical solutions to support all healthcare professionals." According to C-CAMP, the Dutch delegation had expressed interest especially in labour-saving technologies in healthcare, innovations in pharmaceuticals with AI in drug development and discovery and remote monitoring and telehealth related solutions as a screening method for medical triaging.

Barbara Goezinne, Netherlands Vice Minister of Health, Curative Care and Dinesh Gundu Rao, Minister of Health and Family Welfare at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

It added that deliberations also centred upon aligning the Netherlands public health system with the State government through a dedicated effort such as an Innovation Bridge anchored by C-CAMP, as part of a bilateral partnership between government and the Netherlands counterpart.

Ms. Goezinne was taken on an innovation walkthrough of selected C-CAMP digital health innovations where she interacted directly with innovators. C-CAMP digital health innovations include comprehensive maternal and foetal health monitoring system, AI for early detection of lung cancer, AI-powered tuberculosis care, telemetric, tele ECG and vitals monitoring system with auto interpretation, point of care diagnostic solutions for infectious and non-communicable diseases among others.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 2, 1975

Bengaluru Autos Off the Road

Bangalore, April 1: Over 7000 auto rickshaws in Bangalore were off the road to-day in protest against the Karnataka Government's decision to revise the minimum rate to 75 paise as against 90 paise now. The drivers took out a procession through the city, raising slogans demanding restoration of the earlier minimum rate.

The Government had originally fixed the minimum rate at 60 paise. Following the hike in the petrol price, the rate was revised to 90 paise for the first two km. Subsequently, the minimum rate was reduced to 46 paise for the one km, but the drivers continued to collect 90 paise. The revised rate of 75 paise comes into effect on a date to be announced.

Increase in Power Cut Criticised

Bangalore, April 1: The Government's decision to increase the power cut from 36 per cent to 40 per cent in respect of all high and low tension installation from today would have far-reaching effects on production, particularly on the production of essential commodities, according to Mr. K.G. Subbarama Setty, President of the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry. In a statement he said the Government seemed to have not taken quick action on the suggestions made for the early completion of the Kalinadi project and for the establishment of a thermal power unit at Mangalore to step up the power supply.

Suarabh Shukla's screen odyssey

Ahead of the staging of his *Barff,* Saurabh Shukla speaks on the anatomy of humour and the genesis of the play among other things

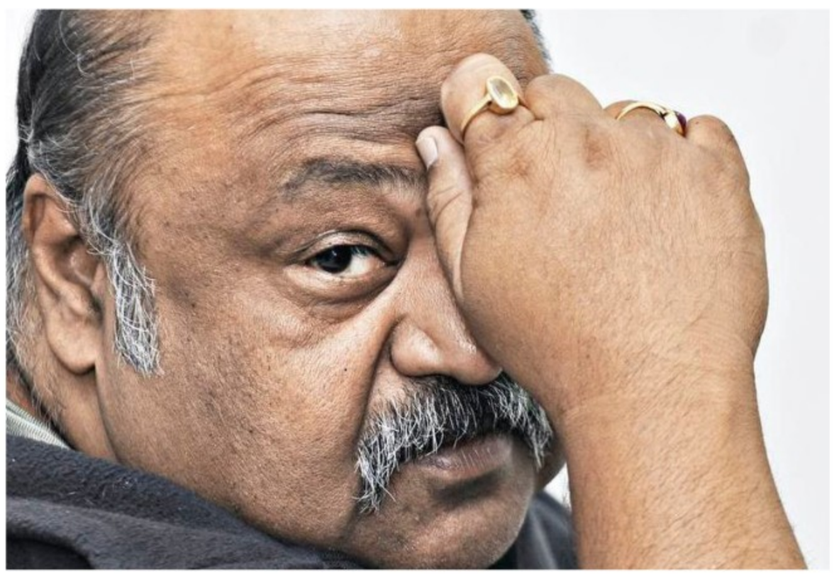
Shilpa Anandraj

When Saurab Shukla is on screen, your eyes are glued to him irrespective of whom he shares the space with. He has portrayed innumerable characters with elan, starting with his debut as the flirtatious Kailash in *Bandit Queen* to his breakout performance as Kallu mama in Ramgopal Varma's *Satya*.

Saurabh balances his work on stage and screen. The actor comes to Bengaluru with AGP World's *Barff that he wrote and* directed. *Barff* is set in Kashmir in winter where the lives of three individuals are entangled in a web of unsettling questions. Apart from Saurabh, the 110-minute play also features Sunil Palwal and Aanchal Chauhan.

The story comes first for Saurabh. "Then you decide what the participation of a certain character within that boundary is," says the actor over phone from Mumbai. "When I am acting, I do not construct a script. When you prepare for a character you try and understand what is being said and then bring in your own experience and thought to it."

Using his role in *Raid* as an example, Saurabh says, "My role is that of an antagonist. Instead of portraying him as completely dark, he goes through a gamut of emotions as a normal person when betrayed by his family."



Man of many faces Actor and theatre artiste Saurabh Shukla, a still from *Barff.* RAJEEV BHATT, / THE HINDU

Saurabh has acted in many plays, including *Hayvadan,* the Hindi version of Girish Karnad's *Hayvadana*. "Adaptation is better than translation, because in an adaptation, you modify a story according to the milieu, and culture. Shakespeare wrote for his time, but when you do Shakespeare today, it will have value if it reinterpreted rather than just replayed."

When he was a part of NSD repertory, Saurabh says *Julius Caesar* was being staged. "The play was adapted by a well-known journalist and a brilliant writer, Arvind Kumar from the Hindi Magazine *Madhuri*. He used Indian names, so Rome was Magadh, which interestingly also had a senate system like Rome, Caesar was Vikram and so on. When you adapt a story, it becomes as exciting as writing an original script."

The actor, who is known for his excellent comic timing says, "Humour is not about laughing at others, but when you can laugh at yourself. When you are in pain, what you need most, is to be happy and laugh. It's like a medicine for a situation for what one is going through."

When one's history is volatile, Saurabh says, humour becomes a part of the person. "You can't keep crying all the time. You need to learn to laugh, it becomes a defence mechanism. Humour is an important part of any characterization – it does not need to be comic, but the sense of humour is definitely there."

Ironically, some of the best comedians were the saddest people. "I do not think humour failed them. Instead I believe humour must have opened up more layers. Too much knowledge also brings sadness, an awareness of what's going on. If you are oblivious to things, then you live happily. If, however, you acquire knowledge, then, knowledge demands more understanding and a crucial part of that wanting to question and figure it out. If you practise humour in your day-to-day life, then you are a very serious person in reality."

What was interesting about the characters Charlie Chaplin played according to Saurabh is that while the character went through the saddest possible things, he is oblivious of the pain and keeps going.

"That gives you positive energy. There is a scene in a film where he eats a shoe. It's a sad moment, but the character is so positive that he is unaware of that pain, and that gives him the courage to go through."

A fan of Peter Sellers, Saurabh says the actor found his popular character, the French detective, Inspector Clouseau, in the Pink Panther movies a burden.

"In the *Life and Death of Peter Sellers*, you discover how unhappy he was with the character. He made a film *Being There*, where he plays a gardener. It is considered one of the most beautiful films he has ever made and yet the film flopped badly. He was so heartbroken and never recovered from that."

Fiction, says Saurabh, is a mirror image of reality. "In real life, you do not know what will happen next. If I tell you what may happen, then it becomes a fiction. Reality is more bizarre than any fiction." Approaching a role, Saurabh says, is a process. "I comprehend the actions of the character and make sense of why he is behaving in a particular way. That understanding comes only from your bank of knowledge, your life experiences."

If one is playing a murderer, Saurabh says, one cannot tap into a lived experience. "Instead, you go to those moments of rage or moments when you have thought of murder but have not acted on it. For screen, you use that seed to build into an action."

Humour, Saurabh says asks for acceptance. "You are not in denial. Love, hate, anger, envy, deviousness are all natural emotions and you need to accept this truth."

Barff **,** *came* about, Saurabh says, from something someone told him. "The situation described fascinated me and I decided to write a story. It was not a philosophical but a physical situation. *Barff* is structured as a thriller. It is a edge-of-the-seat drama. It took me almost six to seven years to write *Barff*. There are different layers in the play which were not intended at the beginning but developed in the telling."

"It's an uncharted journey that leads to many other discoveries. It is a journey that changes you, an experience you go through which changes you as a person. *Barff* was first written as a film and then adapted for stage. I would love to make it into a film one day."

Barff will be staged in Bengaluru on April 6 at Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, 7.30pm. Tickets on BookMyShow.

Philosophy in a love triangle

Vivek MV

Yogaraj Bhat revived the romance genre in Kannada cinema with *Mungaru Male* and *Gaalipata*. In his prime, the director wrote love stories with great emotional depth.

Once the law of averages caught up with him, Yogaraj experimented with concepts (*Panchatantra*) but lost his control over filmmaking. With *Manada Kadalu,* the filmmaker is back to his favourite theme. The movie is a love triangle with a difference, as it offers the audience a heavy dose of philosophy.

Manada Kadalu (Kannada)
Director: Yogaraj Bhat
Cast: Sumukha, Anjali Anish, Rashika Shetty, Rangayana Raghu, Dattanna
Runtime: 154 minutes
Storyline: Sumukha, an MBBS dropout, pursues love interest Rashika. However, circumstances leads to self-discovery and realisation of life's value.

The film's protagonist, Sumukha, is an MBBS dropout. The sudden demise of a staff member in his university rattles him, making him lose trust in medical science.

Circumstances lead the protagonist to a tourist spot situated on a fictitious island inspired by the Murud-Janjira Fort in Maharashtra, where he meets an archeologist (Anjali Anish) and a discontinued cricketer (Rashika Shetty), with whom he falls in love.

Humour, one of Yogaraj's biggest strengths, is tepid in *Manada Kadalu*. The lead characters are just another iteration of the quirky and talkative people seen in his films. Yet, the love triangle is appealing, thanks to the energetic performance from Sumukha, Rashika and Anjali.

Manada Kadalu delves into the meaning of death, a concept touched upon by the director in his previous movies (*Gaalipata, Paramatma*). In his latest film, he goes deep into the idea of life and death. The problem with *Manada Kadalu* is the director's intention to convey too many things. Lessons on history, the generation gap, relationships, and philosophy, make it too much to digest after a point.

It is admirable to see a seasoned filmmaker attempting to reinvent his pet theme. The issue lies in Yogaraj's writing, which is apprehensive of attention-deficit audiences, due to whom, the director has alienated his supporters, who admired his memorable characters.

The film's technical department makes up for the convoluted story. J Shivakumar's production design and Santhosh Rai Pathaje's cinematography is jaw-dropping. The evergreen combination of Yogaraj and V Harikrishna has delivered a melodious album, with *Naguthalide* and *Hoo Dumbiya Katheya* being the best.

If you compare the film with Yogaraj's's previous projects (*Garadi* and *Karataka, Damanaka*), *Manada Kadalu* is quite an engaging movie. However, if you are looking for something close to his best works, you will be a tad disappointed.

Manada Kadalu is currently running in theatres

Something old, something new A still from *Manada Kadalu.* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

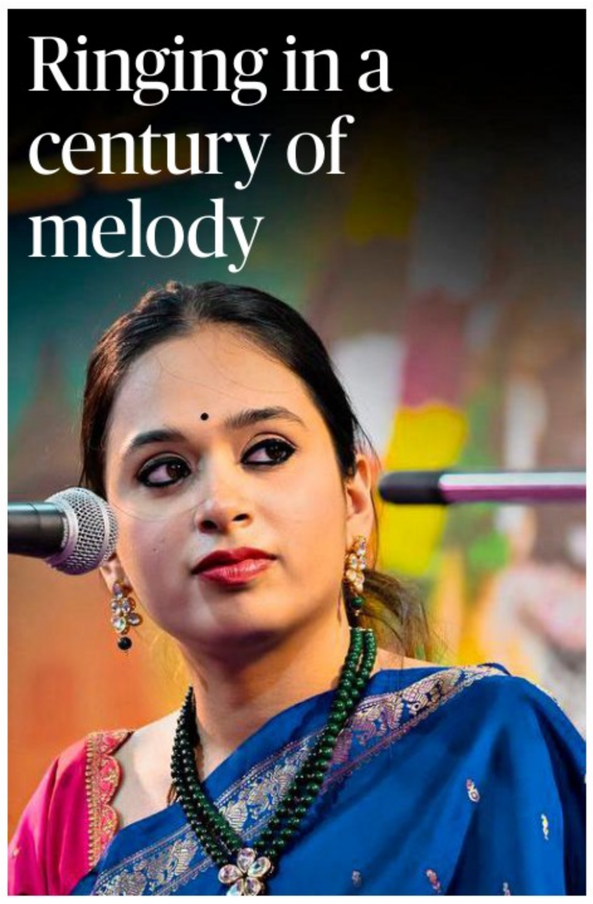
Ringing in a century of melody

Ranjani Govind

The music of Ramanavami fills the city again as the 119-year-old Rama Bhaktha Sabha, the oldest festival banner in Bengaluru, flagged off its annual programme of seasonal music and discourses. The festival which began on March 30, will conclude on April 7. "Our Ramothsava generally culminates with Ramanavami, having begun during Ugadi itself," says the current Sabha president CV Venkatesh.

The Sabha took root in Bethamangala, Kolar district and subsequently, found its way to Bengaluru. "We haven't missed a single, weekly Saturday bhajan in all these years," says Venkatesh, who has been helming the Sabha's activities and yearly
Ramothsava for more than three decades.

The Rama Bhaktha Sabha was founded by CV Subba Rao, a scholarly man who was a connoisseur of music and deeply religious. His passion drove him to keep the melodies and discourses going, even if he had to painstakingly arrange for funds. "In the early 1900s, my grandfather, known as compounder CV Subba Rao, would request patients to contribute towards the Sabha, but never accepted a fee for his services," says Venkatesh.



Love and devotion Medha Vidyabhushan will be one of the vocalists performing at the Rama Bhaktha Sabha this year. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Since Subba Rao's life mission was to have the Ramothsava present both spiritual and classical melodies, he was particular the Mandali followed the same principles. "He had taken a vow from my father CS Vasudev Rao that the Mandali would be run with an undercurrent of devotion, and a good measure of cultural arts from Karnataka," explains Venkatesh, recalling his father's efforts in following Subba Rao's wishes. "My father was also advised to keep aside his salary for a month for this purpose."

The Rama Bhakta Sabha programme commenced with *Devaranama* and *Namasankeerthane,* around 118 years ago, and gradually came to include all cultural arts.

"There were days when devotional stalwarts such as Madhav Das and Prahladachar participated in our Saturday bhajans too," says Venkatesh.

He adds, "This year, our 119th edition will feature a diverse programme – Pravachana experts such as Kalhapura Pavamanachar, Shrihari Valvekar Acharya, Kheda Vedavyasacharya and Ayanoor Madhusudhanachar will be participating. While Ramavittalachar would be speaking on *Vadirajathirtharu*, a *harikatha* on 'Rukmini Kalyana' would be presented by Seetaram Munikoti, as well as a *dasavani* by Mysore Ramachandrachar.

A yakshagana performance by the Mahaganapathi Yakshagana Mandali, as well as devotional songs by Pranesh P Bharadwaj and *dasagana* by Sameerachar and party, will also be presented.

In the vocal section, audiences can expect classical concerts by Rachana Sharma, Kumari Varada Kulkarni, Sheshaprasad and Medha Vidyabhushan.

Daughter of renowned vocalist Vidyabhushana, Medha who is equally busy as a playback singer and on Carnatic platforms, says to sing under the Rama Bhaktha Sabha banner is to be part of a legacy woven with devotion and music. "For me, this opportunity is a blessing to contribute to a tradition deeply rooted in divinity – a testament to the power of faith and love for melody that the past generations have built through their dedication."

Rama Bhaktha Sabha is at Srikanteshwara Bhavana, 5th cross, Malleswaram. Entry free. Sabha schedule on social media. Call 94491 63364.

CITYBEATS

Artistic legacy

APRIL 4
A retrospective exhibition, honouring the legendary artist MTV Acharya, will be on till April 13. Curated by Shivanand Basavanthappa, the exhibition celebrates the life and works of Acharya, known for his work in *Chandamama* magazine. Acharya was also known for his mythological paintings.
At the Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi. Entry free.

Mango junction

ONGOING
India Sweet House has introduced a range of mango-infused desserts and beverages. This limited edition has been made from hand-picked mangoes, and includes sweets such as sandesh, jalbhara, rasmalai, seekarane, shrikhand, lassi and more – all starring mango as the main ingredient.
Priced ₹50 upwards, available across all India Sweet House outlets.

Tropical vibes

ONGOING
Indulge in a special Mangga menu, which means mango in Malay. From a mango tango smoothie, N&M mangga salad and mango sticky rice roll to signature dishes such as smoky ayam satay madura and Malaysian yellow mango curry, seasonal options abound.
From noon till 11pm everyday, starting at ₹270 upwards. At all Nasi and Mee outlets.

Ranya's mother moves HC for preserving CCTV camera footage

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Tuesday ordered issue of notice to the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and others on a petition filed by Rahini H.P., mother of actor Ranya Rao, seeking directions to the authorities to preserve closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera footage of her daughter on her arrival at Kempegowda International Airport on March 3.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna, before whom the petition came up for hearing, adjourned further hearing on the petition till Wednesday.

The petitioner has also sought a direction to the authorities not to delete or tamper with the footage of her daughter on her disembarkment from the flight, including her passage through the aero-bridge, and until her exit from the airport along with the process of search, seizure of allegedly smuggled gold bars, *mahazar* and her arrest between 4.30 p.m. on March 3, and 6 a.m. on March 4.

'Stop auctioning land at Kancha Gachibowli'

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Building on a series of ongoing protests over the weekend, students at the University of Hyderabad (UoH) have gathered once again for two major demonstrations on Tuesday amid heavy police deployment, intensifying their opposition to the auctioning of 400 acres of land in Kancha Gachibowli.

At the university's main gate, over 150 members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) assembled for a 'maha dharna', which began at 10.30 a.m. Simultaneously, another 150 members from various student groups staged a protest near the administration block. Holding banners, students demand the cancellation of the 400-acre land auction.

They called for a permanent boundary wall to safeguard university land from encroachment. They also insisted on the public release of all legal documents, land surveys, government orders, and Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation correspondences related to the auction.

Also, students are urging legal action against officials who violated university statutes without Executive Council's nod.

Empuraan gets 24 'voluntary cuts' after right-wing backlash

A re-edited version of the film, with a 2.08-minute cut likely to appear today; MDMK leader Vaiko asks T.N. govt. to ban screening of the movie

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The makers of Mohanlal-starrer *L2: Empuraan* have made 24 "voluntary cuts" to the film, totalling 2.08 minutes, following sustained right-wing backlash after its release last Thursday.

The re-edited version, certified by the regional officer of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), is likely to appear in most cinemas in India only by Wednesday.

As per the re-censor certificate, one of the major changes is in the name of the character Balraj, alias Baba Bajrangi, the antagonist who leads a mob, which appears to be a reference to Bajrang Dal leader Babu Bajrangi who was sentenced to life imprisonment for masterminding the Naroda Patiya massacre as part of the Gujarat pogrom of 2002. The character has been renamed Baldev in the re-edited version. The display card mentioning the period of events as 'India 2002' has been changed to 'a few years ago.'

The visuals of vehicles passing in front of a religious structure, violence against women and visuals of dead bodies during the riot scenes in the film have also been removed. A conversation between a young Zayed Masood (played by the director of the film Prithviraj Sukumaran) and his father Masood during the riots has been removed. References to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is shown as being used by the ruling party against political opponents, also got the scissors.

The cuts have also affected the 'Special Thanks' during the film credits, with the names of actor and Union Minister of State for Petroleum Suresh Gopi and IRS officer Jyothis Mohan getting removed.

Gets a chop: Malayalam film actor Mohanlal during a promotional event ahead of the *L2: Empuraan* release . SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Vaiko on dam reference

Meanwhile, in Tamil Nadu Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) general secretary Vaiko on Tuesday urged the State government to "ban the screening" of the Mohanlal starrer saying the movie had portrayed Mullaperiyar dam as unsafe.

In a statement, the Rajya Sabha MP said in the film there was a reference to a dam in Nedumpally and a dialogue made a case for demolishing it since the Travancore King was threatened by the British to sign an agreement for lease of land for 999 years.

"Dialogues in four places say even though the British have left and the King is gone, the dam is still there to destroy Kerala," said Mr. Vaiko. He said yet another dialogue was in favour of "bombing" the dam. "If we bomb the dam, which is drowning people even if two shutters are opened, it will destroy the entire Kerala," Mr. Vaiko said, adding that the film also dismissed the safety of the check dams. "It is safe only if there is no dam," Mr. Vaiko quoted another dialogue.

(With inputs from Chennai)

Centre rejects MP's charge on off-shore mining issue

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Asserting that off-shore mining activity is yet to begin, Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh on Tuesday rejected the Opposition's charge that it was impacting the fishermen community of Kerala.

He made the comment in the Lok Sabha while replying to a Calling Attention Motion, moved by Congress member K.C. Venugopal, on the "hardships faced by the fishermen community". "When the mining has not yet started, how you are saying that it is impacting the fishermen," he asked.

Earlier, Mr. Venugopal, while moving the motion, said India was one of the world's largest fish-producing countries. "The sector provides food, nutrition, and livelihood to millions – yet what do we give back to those who sustain it?"

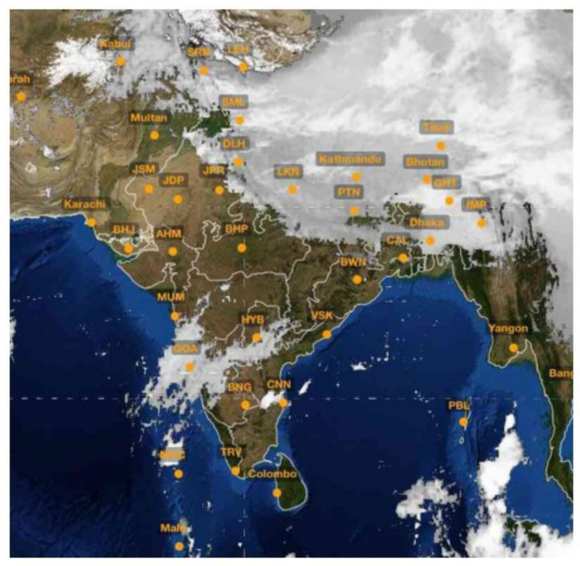
He said that Indian fishermen contribute to a booming industry – 1.24% of India's Gross Value Added (GVA) and 7.28% to agricultural GVA in 2018-19.

The Congress MP said during the Kerala floods in 2018, the community played a key role in helping the people of the State but the government has now forgotten them.

Listing out steps taken by the NDA government, Mr. Singh said policies like the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana and Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund were helping the fishermen of the country.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Karnataka and Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds/squall/hail likely at isolated places over Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	34.0	26.0	Kozhikode	—	36.2	28.0
Ahmedabad	—	40.8	23.2	Kurnool	—	38.6	25.5
Aizawl	—	35.1	20.4	Lucknow	—	36.7	16.7
Allahabad	—	39.6	16.8	Madurai	—	37.0	26.1
Bengaluru	—	32.0	21.1	Mangaluru	—	33.8	26.1
Bhopal	—	37.0	18.8	Mumbai	—	37.7	25.3
Bhubaneswar	—	35.6	25.0	Mysuru	—	—	—
Chandigarh	—	34.6	16.8	New Delhi	—	34.5	14.6
Chennai	—	34.6	25.0	Patna	—	37.5	21.3
Coimbatore	—	35.2	24.2	Port Blair	—	32.6	25.0
Dehradun	—	33.9	13.8	Puducherry	—	33.0	25.4
Gangtok	—	22.4	12.8	Pune	—	37.0	22.8
Goa	—	35.0	28.0	Raipur	—	38.4	24.2
Guwahati	—	34.5	19.4	Ranchi	—	34.4	18.2
Hubballi	—	38.0	22.0	Shillong	—	25.8	15.0
Hyderabad	—	34.7	23.9	Shimla	—	25.0	12.6
Imphal	—	28.5	16.0	Srinagar	—	23.5	5.2
Jaipur	—	35.9	21.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.4	26.6
Kochi	—	34.2	28.0	Tiruchi	—	36.1	24.6
Kohima	—	28.1	17.2	Vijayawada	—	37.0	24.6
Kolkata	—	35.8	26.5	Visakhapatnam	—	33.6	26.3

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.41	6	.—	... 160	...133	
Bengaluru	.13	..—	21	... 130	...104	
Chennai	...5	7	34	 84	...112	
Delhi	.46	..51	13	... 264	...238	
Hyderabad	...5	105	11	... 174	...144	
Kolkata	...8	..26	15	 84	82	
Lucknow	.19	..38	46	... 101	...122	
Mumbai	...4	..70	28	... 102	...132	
Pune	.20	137	87	... 204	...153	
Visakhapatnam	...8	..54	21	 70	...100	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Siliguri, West Bengal recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 285 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Charkhi Dadri, Haryana recorded a healthy AQI score of 28

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Daily warns Ministers against Waqf stance

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

Close on the heels of an appeal by the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC) for political support on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, a Catholic Church-run daily has issued a warning to parliamentarians from Kerala that "future generations will hold you accountable" if they fail to back the legislation.

In its editorial on Tuesday, the *Deepika* criticised the Congress and the CPI (M), suggesting that these parties believe that certain communities' votes are assured, while the others need to be appeased periodically. "Whatever the case may be, do not trim secular and democratic values just to fit the Waqf footwear," it cautioned.

Emphasising that those affected by the Waqf laws deserve legal remedies, it argued that if the CPI(M) and the Congress still fail to recognise this need, "there is little left to say."

Highlighting the case of Munambam residents, the editorial said the amendment is crucial for securing their rightful revenue claims. It was in response to this urgency that the KCBC president personally urged Kerala MPs to support the Bill. It also urged the BJP to ensure that the Bill includes provisions mandating the return of lands taken over by Waqf to their rightful owners.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large that my client is intending to purchase and acquire all right, title and interest with respect to the following scheduled property, at Samanahalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Banglaore District more fully described in the Schedule below from its owner being Mr. Jose Tom.

Any persons having or claiming or intending to claim any right, title, claim, interest or objection of whatsoever nature in respect of the scheduled property or any part thereof whether by way of sale, ownership, transfer, exchange, charge, encumbrance, assignment, gift, tenancy, sub-tenancy, lease, sub-lease, possession, covenant, license, lien, inheritance, mortgage, possession, pledge, charge, trust, maintenance, donation, easement or otherwise, howsoever are hereby requested to notify in writing to the undersigned, within a period of 7 *(seven)* days from the date of this publication of this Notice, of his/her/its such claims, if any, together with all supporting documents duly verified in that regard, failing which the rights and title of the property shall be deemed to be clear, valid and marketable, undisputed and unencumbered and the claim(s), if any , of such person/entity shall be treated as waived and/or not binding on my client and/or abandoned and my Client shall proceed with the proposed acquisition of the property.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the immovable vacant residentially converted land bearing old Sy.No.67/2 and New Sy.No.67/11 measuring 1 acre 22 guntas situated at Samanahalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Banglaore District and with all easementary rights of way, electric and water appurtenant and all other improvements thereto and which is bounded as:

East by : Property of Sy.No.67/3,
West by : Remaining portion of same Sy.No.67/2 *North by* : Thimmasandra Boundary *South by* : Property of Murali and others.

Adv.Abymoan J,
No.48, 1 st Cross, Dinur Main Road,
RT Nagar Post, Bengaluru – 560 032
Date : 01/04/2025

TAMIL NADU CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION LTD.
29/2, Arcot Road, Saligramam, Chennai - 600093 Email ID: tanco93@yahoo.com

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender No: TNCCF/ET/2025/03 DATE: 02.04.2025

Tamil Nadu Consumers' Cooperative Federation invites All India online electronic tender for **"Purchase of 900 Metric Tons of Double Roasted Rava in 1 kg packets,700 Metric Tons of Samba Rava 1kg packets and 800 Metric Tons of Semiya (Vermicelli) 200 gram packets" for The Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme.** Complete **E-TENDER** document can be viewed and downloaded through **https//tntenders.gov.in** and also available in **nicgep/app** free of cost **from 02.04.2025, 11.30 A.M onwards.**

The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-III.

Last Date and Time for Online Submission: **02.05.2025 Upto 10.30 A.M.**

DIPR/1287/TENDER/2025 **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

THE THANJAVUR DISTRICT COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' UNION LTD.,
Nanjikottai Road, Thanjavur - 613006. Phone No : 04362 255379

Rc.No.3611/MKG/2022 **E-TENDER NOTICE** Date: 24.03.2025

Open tenders (Technical bid & Commercial bid) are invited from the eligible vehicle contractors for providing vehicles contract in Thanjavur DCMPU Ltd., for the period of two years (2025-2027) for following works through e-bid only.

S.No.	Name of the work
1	Vehicle Contract for Supply Milk to all channels of agent at Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Myladuthurai Districts. Technical Bid opening **07.05.2025 – 02.30 pm.**
2.	Vehicle Contract for Procure Milk from societies at Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Myladuthurai Districts and also hire the vehicle for office purpose. Technical Bid opening **07.05.2025 – 02.30 pm.**

The tender forms will be available in Tamilnadu Tenders Portal from **04.04.2025, 11.00 AM** to **05.05.2025, 3.00 PM.** The tender forms may be downloaded from **www.tntenders.gov.in** at free of cost. The Last date of submission of tender forms is **05.05.2025** upto **3.00 PM** Pre Bid meeting will be conducted on **25.04.2025** at **11.00 AM** at The Thanjavur District Cooperative Milk Producers Union Ltd., Thanjavur.

The Earnest Money Deposit should be remitted by online payment only.

GENERAL MANAGER,
DIPR/ 1273 /TENDER/2025 The Thanjavur District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd.,

Karnataka Public Work Department
(A Government of KarnatakaEnterprises) O/O Executive Engineer PWD Division, Hosapete, Dist:-Vijayanagara

No:EE/PWD/Dn/Hosapete/TND/AE-3/2024-25/4688 Date:-25.03.2025

Short Term E-Tender Notification

Tenders are invited by undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, PWD Division Hosapete, Vijayanagara Dist, for the works notified in the statement below. The bid shall be in One or Two Cover system namely technical bid and financial bid through KPP Portal, following the link **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sl. No	Work Indent No	Estimate Cost (Rs in Lakhs)	Sl. No	Work Indent No	Estimate Cost (Rs in Lakhs)
	THESE WORK ARE RESERVED FOR SC CATOGERY				
1	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20751	100.00	3	PWD/2024-25/RD/WORK_INDENT18063	50.00
2	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20760	40.95			
	THESE WORK ARE RESERVED FOR ST CATOGERY				
4	PWD/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT20158	25.00	5	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20260	17.77
	THIS WORK IS RESERVED FOR CATOGERY- I				
6	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20808	53.24			
	THIS WORK IS RESERVED FOR CATOGERY II-A				
7	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20750	100.00			
	General Work				
8	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20811	137.16	28	PWD/2024-25/IND0035/CALL-2	52.96
9	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20805	190.40	29	PWD/2024-25/IND0053	140.18
10	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20804	190.40	30	PWD/2024-25/IND0052	29.82
11	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20803	190.40	31	PWD/2024-25/IND0089	100
12	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20802	190.40	32	PWD/2024-25/IND0084	100.00
13	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20801	190.40	33	PWD/2024-25/IND0081	168.19
14	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20799	190.40	34	PWD/2024-25/IND0085	100.00
15	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20772	190.40	35	PWD/2024-25/IND0086	100.00
16	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20771	190.40	36	PWD/2024-25/IND0087	100.00
17	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20765	127.10	37	PWD/2024-25/IND0083	100.00
18	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20762	190.40	38	PWD/2024-25/IND0092	100.00
19	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20747	190.00	39	PWD/2024-25/IND0088	100.00
20	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20764	16.76	40	PWD/2024-25/IND0091	100.00
21	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20770	51.59	41	PWD/2024-25/IND0090	100.00
22	PWD/2024-25/IND0030/CALL-2	150.00	42	PWD/2024-25/RD/WORK_INDENT20491	170.00
23	PWD/2024-25/IND0049/CALL-2	180.00	43	PWD/2024-25/RD/WORK_INDENT20095	50.00
24	PWD/2024-25/IND0047/CALL-2	180.00	44	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20753	100.00
25	PWD/2024-25/IND0045/CALL-2	100.91	45	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20249	55.94
26	PWD/2024-25/IND0037/CALL-2	135.68	46	PWD/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT20243	109.4
27	PWD/2024-25/IND0039/CALL-2	180.00	47	PWD/2024-25/IND0080	146.63

1.Quarries of Tender On **As Per kppp Portal.** 2.Last Date of Tender Submission On **11.04.2025 @ 16.00 Hours.** 3.Tender Opening date On **15.04.2025 @ 16.30 Hours.** 4 Financial Bid Opening Date **As Per kppp Portal.**
Note: Any Changes Either in Tender date or any other condition , Tenderers can view in kppp Portal.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/01 **PWD Division Hosapete, Vijayanagara District.**

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

Sl No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender / EMD (In Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	North-East	BWSSB/EE(N-E)/TO/PB/4515/ 2024-25 Date: 26.03.2025	**Rs. 43,01,043/-** / **Rs. 86,100/-**	10.04.2025 upto 4.00 PM	11.04.2025 After 3.00 PM
2		BWSSB/EE(N-E)/TO/PB/4514/ 2024-25 Date: 26.03.2025	**Rs. 42,14,555/-** / **Rs. 84,300/-**		
	Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-East)				
3	North-1	BWSSB/EE(N-1)/TO/4454/ 2024-25 Date: 29.03.2025	**Rs. 64,38,902/-** / **Rs. 1,29,000/-**	07.04.2025 upto 5.00 PM	08.04.2025 After 5.30 PM
4		BWSSB/EE(N-1)/TO/4453/ 2024-25 Date: 29.03.2025	**Rs. 24,85,640/-** / **Rs. 50,000/-**		
	Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-1)				
	Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.				
5	South-1	BWSSB/EES-1/TO/AE/4438/ 2024-25 Date: 27.03.2025	**Rs. 17,52,423/-** / **Rs. 43,900/-**	09.04.2025 upto 4.00 PM	11.04.2025 After 4.00 PM
6		BWSSB/EES-1/TO/AE/4437/ 2024-25 Date: 27.03.2025	**Rs. 7,35,376/-** / **Rs. 18,400/-**		
	Sd/- Executive Engineer (South-1)				

The detail regarding the tender & participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/5989/Zen/2024-25

Pension woes

The Centre must bring in transparency in scrutiny of pension claims

The Standing Committee of Parliamentarians on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development, in its report on the 2025-26 demands for grants to the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, has rightly reiterated the urgent need to revise the minimum monthly pension of ₹1,000 for member-pensioners under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). This amount, fixed in August 2014 under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) of 1995, has remained unchanged for over a decade. Ironically, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government continues to take credit for the pension hike in 2014, though it merely implemented a decision announced earlier by the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime. Back in 2014, when the UPA proposed the ₹1,000 minimum pension, the BJP, which was in the Opposition, criticised the move as insufficient. Its senior leader, Prakash Javadekar, called it a "pittance" and demanded a hike to at least ₹3,000.

At present, the government allocates an average of ₹980 crore annually for minimum pension payments. This figure needs to be tripled in order to make it a meaningful increase. Additionally, the Centre contributes 1.16% of wages (capped at a ₹15,000 monthly wage ceiling) towards the EPS corpus – an amount revised to ₹9,250 crore for 2024-25 and expected to cross ₹10,000 crore in 2025-26. The government's argument is that it cannot afford a further financial burden, but feasible suggestions to manage the additional expenditure have been submitted to the Labour and Finance Ministries and the EPFO. Equally concerning is the EPFO's handling of applications from those opting for pensions based on higher wages. Many applicants, now receiving demand notices requiring contributions amounting to several lakhs of rupees, have been left in the dark about their entitled pension amounts and arrears. In several cases, applicants have had to rely on their online accounts to track updates, as the EPFO has failed to issue any official communication. Instead of providing clarity, applicants are expected to calculate their expected pension through a portal-based calculator that comes with a disclaimer and no assurance of accuracy. The situation is worse for member-pensioners from exempted establishments, where authorities have summarily rejected applications for higher pension and even stopped previously sanctioned higher pensions without proper explanation. The Union government must initiate comprehensive stakeholder consultations, take steps to increase the monthly pension and ensure the fair treatment of all member-pensioners.

Leave it alone

Any change in Greenland's status must come from the choices of its residents

Vice President J.D. Vance's recent visit to Greenland, where he reaffirmed United States President Donald Trump's plan to assert control over the Arctic island, was a blunt demonstration of American power over a strategically vital territory inhabited by around 56,000 people. The visit drew sharp disapproval from Greenland's local leaders and the Danish government, which retains sovereignty over the island. It marked a new low in U.S.-Greenland relations, which have soured in recent weeks. While Mr. Vance was inspecting the Pituffik Space Base (formerly Thule Air Base), Mr. Trump declared that the U.S. would "go as far as we have to" to take control of Greenland. This is not the first time that an American administration has attempted to acquire the island. In 1867, following the purchase of Alaska from Russia, the U.S. held unsuccessful talks with Denmark to buy Greenland. During the Second World War, after Nazi Germany occupied Denmark, the U.S. established military and radio stations on the island. In 1946, Washington offered Denmark $100 million for Greenland, which it rejected. More recently, during his first term, Mr. Trump made a similar offer, which was again declined by Denmark and Greenland. Now, in his second term, he is aggressively pursuing the idea, undeterred by the strong opposition from both sides of the Atlantic.

But the Greenland of today is different from the Greenland of the 19th or even the mid-20th century. Once a Danish colony, it was formally incorporated into the Kingdom of Denmark in 1953. After a 1979 referendum, it gained autonomy, with foreign affairs and defence under Danish control. Since then, nationalist sentiment has grown, with polls indicating over 80% of Greenlanders in support of full independence. In another survey, 85% of the population opposed becoming a part of the U.S. The American push for Greenland is rooted in geopolitical calculations. As climate change accelerates Arctic ice melt, the region is becoming more accessible for navigation and resource extraction. Only five countries have direct access to the Arctic seabed: Canada, Russia, Norway, Denmark (via Greenland), and the U.S. (via Alaska). Russia already maintains a strong military presence in the region. Washington sees control of Greenland as a way to expand its Arctic claims and access to untapped natural resources. But attempting to seize territory for strategic or economic gain echoes the behaviour of bygone empires. Mr. Trump's expansionist ambitions risk further undermining the fragile post-war international order, which is grounded in principles of territorial integrity and national sovereignty. The U.S. should respect the will of the people of Greenland. Any change in the island's status must come through the democratic choices of its residents, and not through external pressure or geopolitical gamesmanship.

India's educational transformation — the true picture

Dharmendra Pradhan

is Union Minister of Education

It has been argued that the education system in India has veered off its course in the last 11 years of the Narendra Modi government. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The country that witnessed the monumental neglect of the education system by previous governments is deeply aware of the unpleasant truth. While nations across the world reimagined education for a rapidly evolving world, India's educational framework remained trapped in a time capsule, with the last major policy update in 1986, which was marginally amended in 1992. This was a deliberate perpetuation of colonial mindsets accompanied by a move to insulate the country from rapid technological changes taking place in the world.

What past policy was like

Corruption and a governance deficit were the defining features of the country's educational past. Public universities were systematically starved of funds. Unregulated private institutions mushroomed into degree mills. Those who suffer from selective amnesia need to be reminded of the infamous Deemed University scandal of 2009 – university status was granted to 44 private institutions without proper evaluation, with many found guilty of financial irregularities. Political interference in education was rampant.

The University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education became instruments of control rather than enablers of excellence. Appointments to leadership in universities were based on political loyalty. Textbooks deliberately downplayed the contributions of revolutionaries such as Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Veer Savarkar and others while portraying uncomfortable historical truths about foreign invasions. Historical narratives were carefully curated to serve partisan interests. India's diverse cultural and intellectual traditions were systematically marginalised. All of these contributed toward creating an education system that remained disconnected from India's glorious past and devoid of civilisational ethos.

The National Education Policy of 2020 represents a decisive break from this inglorious past. It is a product of the most extensive democratic consultations in India's policy history. Based on the five pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability, the NEP 2020 is a policy of the people, by the people and for the future of the people.

> The National Education Policy of 2020 is based on one of most extensive democratic consultations in India's policy history and will enable an educational renaissance

The focus is empowerment and change

One of its primary objectives is to correct structural inequities inherited from centralised, rigid and elitist frameworks. With this transformative approach, the enrolment of Scheduled Castes (SC) in higher education has increased by 50%, Scheduled Tribes (ST) by 75%, and Other Backward Classes by 54% since 2014-15.

Women's empowerment is at the heart of these reforms. Female enrolment across all categories has grown by an impressive 38.8%, crossing 2.18 crore in 2022-23. Among Muslim minority students, female enrolment rose by 57.5%. In the board examinations, the performance of girls has shown steady improvement. In higher education, PhD enrolment among women has increased by a whopping 135%. Today, women in the field of higher education STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine) constitute 43%, thus shattering the glass ceiling in domains that were dominated by men. Female teachers now constitute 44.23% of the teaching workforce, up from 38.6% in 2014, thus transforming academic leadership landscapes. The data represent a fundamental shift in India's academic ecosystem, with women reclaiming their rightful place in India's intellectual journey.

These gains reflect a fundamental shift in priorities. Per-child government expenditure has increased by 130%, from ₹10,780 in 2013-14 to ₹25,043 in 2021-22. The Government is prioritising early childhood education and foundational learning and numeracy for a child's overall development, cognitive growth, and future learning. Government schools are being upgraded with modern infrastructure, holistic pedagogy and other support systems. With concerted efforts, the number of out-of-school children and also drop-out rates have decreased. The pupil-teacher ratio has improved, and, most importantly, learning outcomes have been steadily improving.

The NEP 2020 has introduced futuristic elements such as coding from middle school, multidisciplinary approaches to problem-solving, and innovation hubs in rural areas. Over 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) are nurturing grassroot-level innovation. The Government has plans to add 50,000 more ATLs with broadband Internet connectivity in schools in the five years ahead. These initiatives represent a fundamental reimagining of education for India's future.

In higher education, sustainable revenue models have freed universities from resource dependency. India now has 11 universities in the QS World Rankings top 500, a remarkable improvement from the past. Research publications have increased by 88% since 2015, propelling India to 39 in the Global Innovation Index, up from 76 in 2014. The Anusandhan-National Research Foundation is nurturing research and innovation in collaboration with industry and academia.

Language primacy

Most significantly, the NEP has restored primacy to all Indian languages and knowledge traditions, overcoming the decades of 'English-first' policies. Through the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) initiative, over 8,000 higher education institutions have adopted IKS curricula. Through the Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Yojana, 15,000 original and translated textbooks in 22 Indian languages will be published, which will benefit millions of young minds to express themselves in their mother tongues.

The Government's commitment to social justice was reflected in the enactment of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019, for reservation of teaching positions in central educational institutions for SCs, STs, and others by treating the 'Institution as one Unit' rather than a grossly flawed system of treating 'each Department as one Unit'. Similarly, the Government dispensed with the mischievous practice of declaring "None Found Suitable" in university recruitments to reject candidates from SC/ST/OBC categories and converting these into non-reserved posts, in the interest of making reservation truly meaningful.

The government remains focused on building a Viksit Bharat wherein education truly liberates and empowers. The decade ahead will witness an educational renaissance that honours India's past while fearlessly embracing the future. India's education system has finally broken free from colonial shadows and ideological captivity. It stands poised to fulfil the dreams of millions of Indians.

This is not merely education reform. It is the intellectual decolonisation that India has awaited for a long time, which will catapult India into the comity of developed nations.

China-India ties across the past and into the future

Xu Feihong

is the Chinese Ambassador to India

Yesterday, April 1, was the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India. Despite the ups and downs, China-India relations have always surged forward like the Yangtze and the Ganges. Looking back at this extraordinary journey, there are four inspirational factors embedded therein that are worth drawing upon.

Leaders and their guidance

First, the strategic guidance of our leaders as the 'anchor'. Over the past 75 years, the leaders of the two countries have consistently steered the relationship at critical historical junctures. In 1950, Chairman Mao Zedong and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made the historic decision of establishing diplomatic ties – India was the first non-socialist country to have diplomatic relations with China. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited China, and the two sides agreed to "look forward", initiating the normalisation process of bilateral relations. Since 2013, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi carried out "hometown diplomacy" and two informal meetings, which propelled relations into a period of rapid development. Last October, the leaders met in Kazan, and opened a new chapter in relations.

Second, friendly exchanges and cooperation form the 'foundational fabric' of China-India relations. Looking back through history, our two civilizations have flourished like twin lotuses, interconnected and mutually illuminating. Our two peoples have empathised with and supported each other in the struggle for national independence and liberation. Rabindranath Tagore and Dr. Kotnis have become timeless emblems of the China-India friendship. Since the turn of the century, China and India have forged a strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity. Under these important frameworks, nearly 50 dialogue mechanisms have been established at all levels and in various fields. Bilateral trade volume has risen from less than $3 billion (2000) to $138.5 (2024). Cooperation in culture, education, tourism and other fields has expanded continuously.

Third, bridging differences through dialogue stands as the 'one and only key' of China-India relations. As Prime Minister Modi has said, when two neighbouring countries exist, occasional disagreements are bound to happen. Even within a family, not everything is always perfect. But our focus is to ensure that these differences do not turn into disputes. As two ancient civilisations, China and India both have the wisdom and the capacity to resolve differences through dialogue. Faced with the boundary question left over from history, they have established communication channels such as the Special Representative Mechanism on the China-India Boundary Question, and strive to seek a proper solution. At the end of last year, the two sides pushed the border situation back to one of tranquillity through intensive dialogue.

> China and India are at a critical stage of national development, and as more partners than rivals, should help build a healthy and stable bilateral relationship

Fourth, working for the future of the world is the "important mission" of relations. President Xi Jinping once said, if China and India speak with one voice, the whole world will listen; and if we join hands, the whole world will pay attention. Historically, the total economic volume of the two countries has long accounted for half of global GDP, making momentous contributions to human progress. After the establishment of diplomatic relations, China and India jointly advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promoted the independence and the unity of Asian and African countries. As vital members of multilateral mechanisms such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the G-20, China and India should take the common responsibilities of safeguarding the rights and the interests of developing countries, and upholding multilateralism.

On the ground

As the only two major developing countries and representatives of emerging economies, China-India relations have become one of the world's most crucial bilateral relations. The sound and stable development of bilateral relations serves the fundamental interests of the two peoples, meets the common aspiration of regional countries, and is conducive to world peace, development and prosperity.

Recently, China and India have implemented the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries. The two Foreign Ministers have met several times on multilateral occasions. The 23rd Special Representatives' meeting on the China-India Boundary Question and the Vice Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue have been held successively, reaching many points of consensus. The two sides maintain communications on issues of mutual concern. There is a good momentum to bilateral economic and trade cooperation. People-to-people exchanges are increasing. In the first quarter of this year, the Chinese Embassy and Consulate-Generals in India have issued over 70,000 visas to Indian citizens. These figures fully demonstrate the strong motivation for exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

It is the common will of the two peoples and the unstoppable tide of history to advance China-India friendship and cooperation. The "dragon-elephant tango" is the only right choice for both sides. We should adhere to the important consensus reached by the two leaders, and forge a right path for the two neighbouring major countries to coexist in harmony and develop hand in hand.

Steps for Beijing and New Delhi to take

First, we should build a healthy and stable relationship. Both sides should adhere to the strategic judgment made by the two leaders that "China and India are partners rather than rivals, and [pursue] development opportunities rather than [be] threats to each other". We should uphold the principles of mutual respect, mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual accommodation and mutual accomplishment. We should handle differences through dialogue, and never allow relations to be defined by the boundary question, or let specific differences affect the overall picture of bilateral ties, so as to ensure that China-India relations always move along the track of sound development.

Second, we should develop a mutually beneficial relationship. Both China and India are at a critical stage of national development and revitalisation. It is our common goal to develop the economy and improve people's livelihood. China is actively promoting high-quality development and India is committed to realising the vision of a "Viksit Bharat 2047". We should strengthen the alignment of our development strategies, resume and promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields, and push forward the modernisation of the two countries.

Third, we should forge an internationally cooperative China-India relationship. As important members of the Global South, China and India have the responsibility to jointly safeguard the legitimate rights and the interests of developing countries. They should also promote an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalisation. As the rotating president of the SCO, China is willing to work with all parties including India to jointly hold a SCO summit, featuring friendship, solidarity and fruitful outcomes, and lead the SCO into a new stage of high-quality development featuring stronger solidarity, coordination, dynamism and productiveness.

I believe that under the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries and with the joint efforts of people from all walks of life, China and India will move forward steadily along the path of jointly achieving national development and rejuvenation and promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What is special about IPL

The ongoing IPL 2025 season continues to showcase why cricket is more than just a sport — it is a celebration of skill, strategy and entertainment.

The balance between experience and young talent in the IPL has made it an ideal platform for budding cricketers to shine on a global stage.

While the league has transformed cricket into a commercially successful venture, it is equally important to ensure that it does not overshadow the charm of traditional formats. The two formats should complement rather than compete with each other.

Further, as the league grows in popularity, steps should be taken to maintain the spirit of the game by promoting fair play and sportsmanship. The focus should also extend beyond entertainment to grassroots development. The IPL is about the stories, the rivalries and the sheer passion that unites fans worldwide. Let us celebrate this cricketing festival while keeping the core values of the sport intact.

Rukma Sharma,
Jalandhar, Punjab

Tackling the disinformation threat in India

Abhishek Roy Choudhury

Former Consultant at KPMG India and at the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025 underscores misinformation and disinformation as the highest ranked short-term global threat. The WEF defines "global risk" as an event that can adversely affect a sizeable portion of the population, the global GDP, and natural resources. The rapid rise of AI-generated content, algorithmic biases, and deep societal divides are making it harder than ever to separate facts from deception.

Information disorder

India, poised to surpass 900 million Internet users, would find itself vulnerable without proper policy implementation to combat disinformation, with its diverse political and social landscape creating fertile ground for manipulated narratives, voter influence, and economic disruption. The crisis isn't just political; it fuels consumer boycotts, economic conflicts, and international tensions. Adding to the chaos, public trust in legacy media is dwindling, and both political actors and non-state entities are exploiting this gap to push propaganda. With trust in mainstream media declining, citizens are relying more on social media for news. This shift has resulted in a significant number of users forwarding unverified information, often believing it to be accurate simply because it comes from friends or family. With former U.S. President Joe Biden's warning of an emerging "tech oligarchy", the world's largest democracy shouldn't wait any further to come up with important policy changes such as the European Union's Digital Services Act to combat Disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI).

With prominent politicians and national parties' social media accounts actively sharing deep fakes and unverified information, India is grappling with an escalating information disorder. As a rising global power, India has faced persistent Chinese disinformation threats since the 2017 Doklam standoff, prompting the ban of over 300 Chinese apps, including TikTok, to curb foreign interference. A study by the Indian School of Business and the CyberPeace Foundation reveals that political disinformation accounts for 46%, followed by general issues (33.6%) and religious content (16.8%). Platforms such as Weibo, operating within China, have been actively trying to propagate a distorted image of India. The risks could escalate if Meta ends fact-checking partnerships, as seen in the U.S. The youth dividend of India is facing a growing threat from false information, as a survey report revealed. The Global Risks Report 2025 perceives that people in high-income countries are more concerned about disinformation risks in the coming years than those in lower-income nations with some exceptions. If Indian citizens fail to recognise how disinformation deepens political and societal divides, the consequences could be severe for the democratic and social fabric.

Recommended measures

The Global Risks Report 2025 recommends measures such as upskilling developers working with algorithms, improving public awareness and digital literacy, and ensuring accountability through supervisory boards and AI councils to oversee Generative AI practices. Initiatives like Shakti - India Election Fact-Checking Collective, and the Deepfake Analysis Unit, played a role in tackling disinformation during the 2024 general elections. With almost 400 million Facebook and over 500 million WhatsApp users, India stands as the largest market for social media platforms. By capitalising on this market power, regulatory bodies can push big tech towards positive policy changes to tackle disinformation, such as audits and transparency actions for Very Large Online Platforms with more than 45 million users, similar to the EU's Digital Services Act. However, caution is needed, as there is a risk that ill-intentions could also escalate surveillance, potentially compromising democratic safeguards, with both censorship and surveillance highlighted as global risks in the WEF report. Platforms should be mandated with regular risk assessment. Adequate funding should be allocated for advancing cybersecurity research and innovation. Transparent content moderation policies must be implemented to address misleading content that threatens public health, safety, or democracy, with strict enforcement of non-discrimination rules. Online ads must disclose funding sources and target audiences to prevent malicious actors from spreading false narratives. Expanding public awareness initiatives, such as the Reserve Bank of India's Financial Literacy Campaign with Amitabh Bachchan, is essential for fostering critical thinking and societal resilience. Collaboration among civil society groups, fact-checkers, and regulators is crucial to create evidence-based policies for information integrity. A support system for independent research on disinformation and FIMI is necessary, along with stronger laws to protect journalists. With the global nature of disinformation, cross-border coalitions must be established for a coordinated global response.

This challenge goes beyond technology; it is a test of our shared democratic values and threatens our collective ability to uphold truth, unity, and equality. As the world's largest democracy, India must set an example of diversity and resilience in a growingly polarised global digital world. The real question isn't just about fighting falsehoods, but also about ensuring that we safeguard our unity in diversity.

This challenge goes beyond technology; it is a test of shared democratic values and threatens our collective ability to uphold truth, unity, and equality

A warning to the Malayalam film industry

The hounding of the makers of *Empuraan* sends a chilling message

STATE OF PLAY

S.R. Praveen
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The most prevalent term in Kerala this week is probably 'voluntary cuts'. Used in reference to the several cuts that the makers of the film, *L2: Empuraan*, were forced to carry out, the term suggests that they willingly did so, to improve the film. It effectively hides the virulent hate campaign and unseen pressures that culminated in the decision, just three days after the film's release.

Empuraan, directed by Prithviraj Sukumaran and starring Mohanlal, begins with a 15-minute sequence of a communal flare-up in India in 2002. While the images in the title sequences appear to be referencing the burning of a coach of the Sabarmati Express carrying saffron-clad men, the opening scenes depict mob violence in which several Muslims are killed, a reference to the Gujarat pogrom. Some sequences seem to refer to the Bilkis Bano case in which 11 men were convicted for the gang-rape and murder of several members of Ms. Bano's family. Baba Bajrangi, the antagonist who leads the mob in the film, is reminiscent of Bajrang Dal leader Babu Bajrangi, who was sentenced to life imprisonment for having masterminded the Naroda Patiya massacre.

While independent cinema has always been forthright with its political commentary, which is often ignored due to the limited reach of these films, mainstream cinema, by design, rarely ruffles feathers. This week, though, a few courageous scenes in an otherwise lazily written commercial film

appear to have shaken the right wing. The Kerala unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which initially appeared to distance itself from the online hate campaigns against *Empuraan*, soon changed tack, with some of its leaders viciously attacking the makers and even their family members. The BJP State vice president, B. Gopalakrishnan, termed film producer Supriya Menon, who is Mr. Sukumaran's spouse, an 'urban Naxal'. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's mouthpiece, *Organiser*, published three articles against the film. One of them specifically targeted Mr. Sukumaran, calling him the "voice of anti-nationals".

The entire controversy over references in the film to relatively recent events in India is playing out at a time when the Hindi film industry is busy churning out propaganda films that advocate for the Central government's concerns. For instance, *The Kerala Story* was called out for maligning the State with false claims and hateful references. But none of these films had to face the scissors of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). On the contrary, many of them were provided tax cuts by BJP-led State governments and ran in theatres for weeks. Censorship and bans seem to apply only to films that run counter to the acceptable narrative. The CBFC recently denied certification to the internationally acclaimed film *Santosh*, objecting to its searing portrayal of police brutality, caste discrimination, and misogyny.

Mr. Mohanlal's apology came as a disappointment for many, especially because it came on the heels of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan expressing solidarity with the film and its makers. Mr. Vijayan's party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), is also lampooned in the film. He made a political statement by watching the film with his family and said that the Sangh Parivar's anger stems from the fact that *Empuraan* references one of the "most brutal genocides the country has ever seen".

The relentless online hounding of those associated with the film appears to be aimed at sending a message to the entire Malayalam film industry, which has been producing films that are not entirely to the liking of the powers that be. The apology from one of the biggest stars of the industry and the 'voluntary cuts' are bound to have a chilling effect on other filmmakers and writers, who might resort to self-censorship. The climate of fear is also reflected in the silence of the rest of the film fraternity, including film organisations and stars, who are otherwise vocal about issues in the industry.

For an industry which has made hard-hitting films such as *Nirmalyam* and *The Great Indian Kitchen*, this is a critical juncture where the decisions taken may decide its future trajectory. If there is no united push back against attempts to dictate what can be depicted, we might soon be watching an assembly line of films that conform to a colourless and monolithic vision of society.

Richer States could lose political clout in population-based delimitation

To frame this discussion as a north-south divide is inaccurate. This debate is about regional disparities

DATA POINT

Varghese K. George
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

A nation state, like a family, is designed on the premise that its resources and responsibilities are collectively shared by its members in an equitable manner agreed upon by the community. The stronger individuals and groups are expected to support the weaker ones; a progressive taxation policy is one manifestation of that approach. When there is significant disparity across regions and social groups, this arrangement comes under strain and needs innovation. India is facing a governance challenge resulting from the regional divergence in wealth and population. That is the trigger for the ongoing debate between States and social groups on delimitation (linked to political representation) and tax devolution (linked to the creation and sharing of wealth and resources).

India's original constitutional scheme envisaged redrawing the map of Lok Sabha seats after every Census, accounting for variations in population. When it was noticed that populations in some regions were not stabilising as rapidly as others, this decadal delimitation was frozen in 1976. It was postponed for 25 years, until 2001, and then again for another 25 years until 2026, through constitutional amendments.

The assumption in postponing delimitation was that by then the development trajectories of a majority of the regions would converge. This did not happen from 1976 to 2001, or even after 2001. In 2026, India would have completed 50 years without inter-State reapportionment of constituencies. With the 2021 Census not conducted, we don't know what the regional demographic trends are.

Population size, composition, and quality are linked to wealth creation and sharing. The graphs show the divergence between various regions in terms of population size and economic performance. Composition and quality are not analysed. To measure economic performance, we use the relative per capita income level – the ratio of a State's per capita Net State Domestic Product to the all-India per capita Net National Product, expressed as a percentage.

Charts 1, 2 and 3 plot States' relative per capita income levels in 1961, 2001 and 2024, respectively. The vertical axis shows relative income levels, while the horizontal axis shows each State's share in India's population. In 1961, the relative income levels of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka were comparable to those of U.P., Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

By 2001, the relative income levels in Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal, and all the southern States had risen to match those of Punjab and Haryana – States that had a head start due to the Green Revolution. In contrast, the levels of U.P., Bihar, and M.P. declined. The newly formed States carved out of them too had low income levels, along with Odisha and Rajasthan.

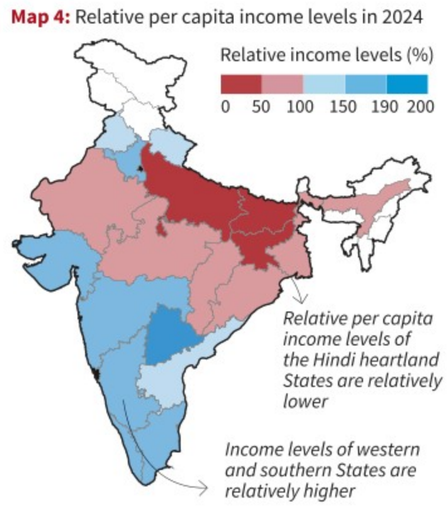
By 2024, the income gap between the economically advanced and lagging States had widened further **(Map 4)**. A few exceptions stood out: the relative income levels of West Bengal and Punjab dipped, while that of Uttarakhand improved. Notably, during this period, the population share of the economically lagging Hindi heartland States grew, while the share of many advanced States – especially in western and peninsular India – was stable or declined.

If delimitation were to happen according to the current population, States with a better economic performance could face a slide in their political power to States with a lower economic performance. To frame this discussion as a north-south divide is inaccurate. This debate is about regional disparities. Addressing them must be a national priority.

State of States

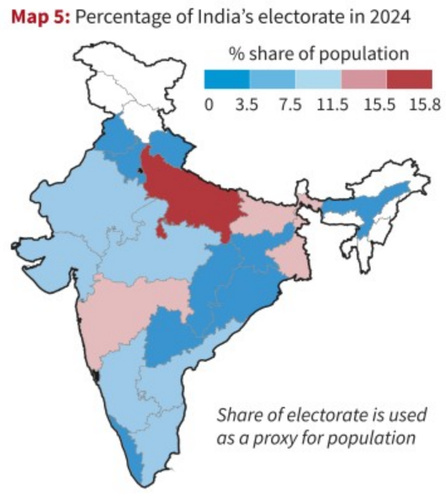
Relative per capita income is sourced from the reports by the Economic Advisory Council to the PM. Population data is from the census. Electorate data is from the ECI

Map 4: Relative per capita income levels in 2024

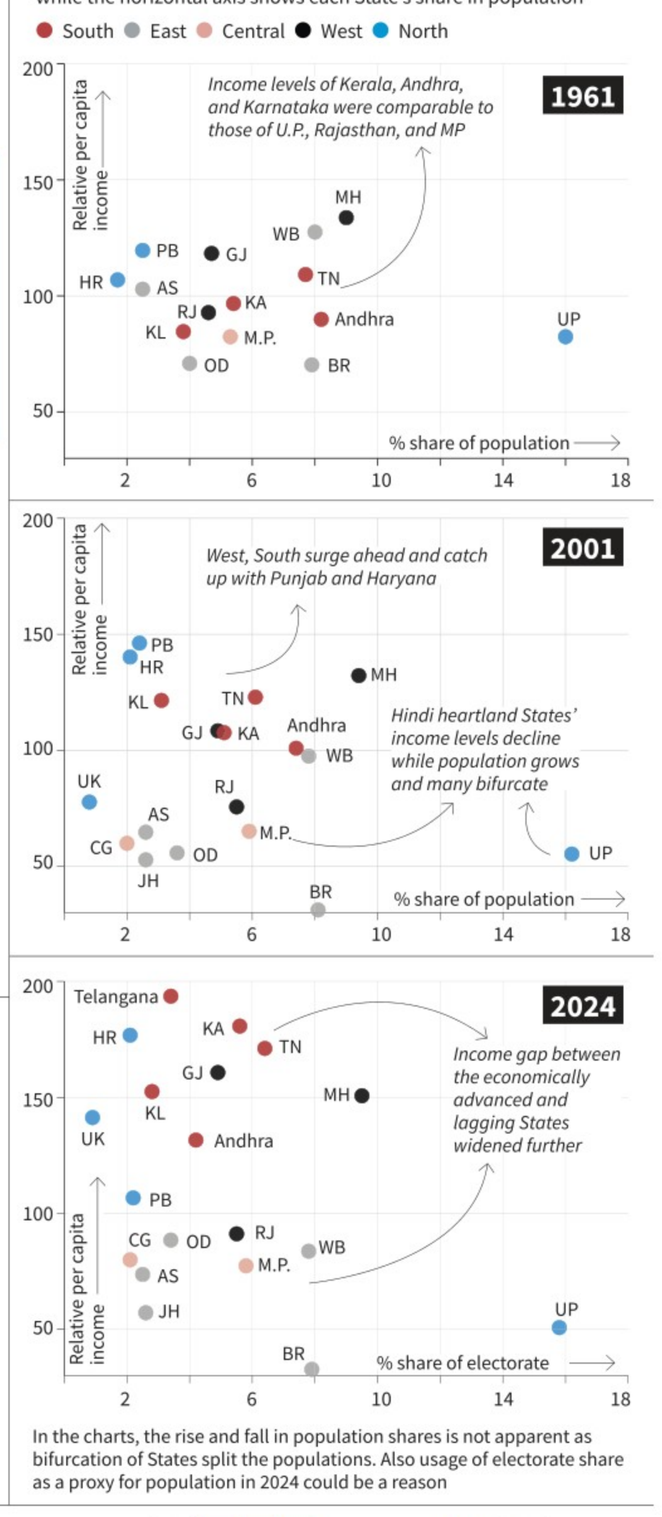


States that did not have relevant data are not coloured

Map 5: Percentage of India's electorate in 2024



Charts 1, 2 and 3: The vertical axis shows relative income levels, while the horizontal axis shows each State's share in population



In the charts, the rise and fall in population shares is not apparent as bifurcation of States split the populations. Also usage of electorate share as a proxy for population in 2024 could be a reason

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 2, 1975

Women harassed from Copter

Bombay, March 31: An alleged attempt to harass two Adivasi women of Nasik district by the occupants of a military helicopter last week figured in the State Assembly to-day when a PWP member, Mr. K.S. Dhondge, raised an adjournment motion on the issue.

He alleged that when the two Adivasi women were returning to their village near Devalli, the occupants of the helicopter chased them and tried to hit them with the chain ladders flung down from the aircraft.

The women had to dive into a nearby pond to evade the chase by the helicopter which, however, continued to hover over the pond even after the women had taken refuge in water. It disappeared from the area only when a batch of people armed with sticks and axes rushed to the scene to rescue the women.

According to Mr. Dhondge, one of the women was seriously injured. When the women attempted to lodge a complaint with the local police, the authorities refused to register the same demanding that the women reveal the number of the helicopter.

The Speaker, Mr. S.K. Wankhede, held over his ruling on the adjournment notice and directed the Minister concerned to make a statement on the issue within a week.

In the Council, where the Chairman disallowed an adjournment motion, Mr. Khanolkar, who raised it, also said police refused to register a complaint about it unless the registration number of the helicopter was given.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 2, 1925

St. Paul's cathedral

London, March 31: Impressive incidents attended the Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral, it being the occasion of the last service under the Dome prior to the closing of the eastern part for the work of preservation which is estimated to take six years. The services in the meantime will be held in the western end of the nave and St. Dunstan's chapel. The organ will no longer be in use, but part of it may be temporarily moved and re-erected and the high Altar may also be moved temporarily to the centre of the nave. The Cathedral can now accommodate a thousand only instead of seven thousand normally.

From Page One

21 killed in explosion at firecracker warehouse

Gujarat Minister Rushikesh Patel told reporters that seven fire teams, eight ambulances, a State Disaster Response Force team and four bulldozers were rushed to the site for rescue operations.

SP Akshayraj Makwana said the casualties occurred after the slab of the godown collapsed following a blast. He said forensic teams were trying to ascertain the cause of the explosion.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel expressed grief over the tragedy and announced an ex gratia to the kin of the deceased (₹2 lakh and ₹4 lakh, respectively) and those injured (₹50,000).

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav also announced assistance of ₹2 lakh to famlies of the deceased and ₹50,000 each to the injured.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties in Gujarat targeted the BJP government, accusing it of negligence.

Bulldozing of houses in U.P. inhumane, says SC

"These cases shock our conscience. Residential premises of the appellants have been high-handedly demolished... There is something called the right to shelter, something called due process... The authorities, and especially the development authority, must remember that the right to shelter is also an integral part of Article 21 of the Constitution," the court observed.

The appellants in the case were Zulfiquar Haider, Shahnaz Parvin, Ali Ahmed Fatmi, Naila Fatmi, Baby Maimuna and Ahmad Ali. The court found that a show-cause notice was issued to them on December 18, 2020 and affixed the same day with a remark that two attempts were made to serve them in person. A subsequent order of demolition on January 8, 2021 was also affixed. The first registered post communication was sent on March 1, 2021 and received on March 6, 2021. The demolitions were carried out the very next day, leaving the appellants with no opportunity to appeal.

Bill may have clause for not altering land status

The amended Bill is likely to have the provision that an existing "Waqf by user" property which was registered on or before the commencement of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 as "Waqf by user" will remain as Waqf property except if it is, wholly or in part, in dispute or is a government property.

It is also likely to suggest that every Waqf property registered prior to the commencement of the Act should have the details of the Waqf and the property dedicated to the Waqf filed on the portal and database within a period of six months from such commencement. In case of failure to do so, the tribunal may, on an application made to it by the Mutawalli, extend the period of six months in case he satisfies the tribunal that he had sufficient cause for not filing the details of the Waqf on the portal within such period.

In the previous Bill, the Collectors were authorised to decide if a Waqf property is government property, while in the new Bill, a State is likely to be given the powers to notify an officer above the rank of Collector to do the same. The designated officer shall conduct an inquiry as per law and determine whether such property is a government property or not and submit a report to the State government. The disputed property will not be treated as Waqf property till the designated officer submits the report.

Probe Minister's role in riots, court tells police

In response to the complaint, the police submitted that the February 2020 riots had been executed by carefully identifying and selecting protest sites in Muslim majority areas which were close to the mosque and main roads, with an aim to escalate the protests, leading to road blockages. The police added that the protests were communal in nature despite donning the garb of a secular agitation, and were expected to generate a critical mass which would eventually lead to violence against the police and common citizens.

The police also maintained that a "well-planned" conspiracy was being hatched against Mr. Mishra to frame him in the matter.

The court noted that the police have indulged in several interpretations and guesswork. It pointed out that one of the submissions claims that women protestors were allowed to take the lead so that police officials would be forced to practise restraint, and so that the secret motive of mass scale violence could be executed.

"...Assuming that the version of the prosecution to be correct, I am at odd to believe that any community, caste, sect, religion, (I have to take up as prosecution has outrightly mentioned the communal overtones) which is preparing for a mass level violence would be led by women of such community, caste, sect or religion wherein their most vulnerable gender would be at peril when violence breaks out," the court observed.

The court also noted that, during interrogation, Mr. Mishra himself acknowledged that he had been present in the area during the riots.

'Defence exports hit new record of ₹23,622 crore in 2024-25'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The country's defence exports have hit a new record high of ₹23,622 crore in the financial year (FY) 2024-25, a growth of 12.04% over the previous fiscal year, the Defence Ministry announced on Tuesday.

"An impressive growth of ₹2,539 crore or 12.04% has been registered in the just-concluded FY over the defence exports figures of FY 2023-24, which were ₹21,083 crore," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on X, adding that India was marching towards achieving the target of increasing defence exports to ₹50,000 crore by 2029.

Defence public sector undertakings have shown a significant increase of 42.85% in their exports in FY2024-25, the Ministry said. "The private sector and DPSUs have contributed ₹15,233 crore and ₹8,389 crore, respectively, in defence exports of 2024-25, whereas the corresponding figures for FY2023-24 were ₹15,209 crore and ₹5,874 crore, respectively," it added.

The Department of Defence Production has a dedicated portal for the application and processing of export authorisation requests, and 1,762 export authorisations were issued in FY 2024-25, compared with 1,507 in the preceding year, registering a growth of 16.92%, it noted.

House panel suggests raising creamy layer limit from ₹8 lakh

Panel urges the Union government to take necessary steps to 'fix a substantially higher income limit' after consulting all stakeholders

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

A parliamentary committee looking into the welfare of Other Backward Classes on Tuesday said it was the "need of the hour" to raise the ₹8 lakh income limit to fix the "creamy layer" within the community, saying that this ceiling, set more than seven years ago, was "low" and covered only a "small segment of OBCs".

The parliamentary committee on OBC welfare is headed by BJP MP Ganesh Singh.

In reports tabled in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, the committee, headed by BJP MP Ganesh Singh, has recommended the Union government to take necessary steps to "fix a substantially higher income limit" after consulting all stakeholders so that "more and more people from the Backward Classes can take benefits of reservation policy for OBCs and various ongoing welfare schemes of the government".

After the Supreme Court's *Indra Sawhney* judgment in 1992, the government had introduced the concept of "creamy layer" to exclude "socially advanced persons/sections" within OBCs from getting reservation or other government benefits. Among the criteria for creamy layer determination, there is also one that sets a limit on family income.

This income limit was set at ₹1 lakh in 1993 and has been raised from time to time since then, the last time in 2017, when the ₹8 lakh limit was set.

The recommendation to raise the income limit for determining the creamy layer was driven home by the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of OBCs in multiple reports it had tabled in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday related to schemes and reservation for OBCs that fall under the purview of the Department of Personnel and Training and the Social Justice Ministry.

In the report on the representation of OBCs pertaining to the DoPT, the committee recommended that the government ensure data on Central job quota implementation be included in Annual Reports and be uploaded on the website. It noted that the DoPT had created a portal – Representation of Reserved Categories in Posts and Services (RRCPS) – to collect data and monitor it.

However, the data on this portal is only available to the Ministries concerned and the DoPT, the committee noted, adding that making this available to the public would bring transparency. This comes after *The Hindu* had reported in December 2024 that the DoPT's 2023-24 Annual Report had left out data on job quotas for the first time in at least two decades. At the time, the DoPT had said it was missing because the data could not be compiled in time.

In the report, the committee pointed out that the creamy layer income limit for OBCs is calculated differently by different State governments (with regards to what sources of income is to be included). The panel recommended the Centre to talk to the States "in the right earnest to follow a uniform formula to the extent possible".

The house damaged in a fire at Dakshin Raipur village in Pathar Pratima block in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. PTI

Eight killed in blaze near firecracker unit in West Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Eight persons, including four children, were killed as a fire broke out following an explosion in a house at Dakshin Raipur village in Pathar Pratima block in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal late on Monday.

"It was an accidental fire; this fire broke out at 8.30 last night. There was an explosion causing the death of seven persons, including four kids, two ladies and gentleman," said Supratim Sarkar, Additional Director-General of Police (South Bengal). One woman was admitted to a State-run facility, where she died of injuries, he added.

The senior police official confirmed the presence of firecrackers in the house but added that only experts at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) could ascertain the reason for the fire. The family also reportedly owned a firecracker manufacturing factory barely 100 metres from their house.

Local people alleged that the factory also manufactured crude bombs at the site. Whenever they had raised objections, the factory owners claimed they had the necessary licence, they said. One family member of the deceased alleged that the police regularly took money from the factory owners.

The deceased were identified as Prabhabati Banik (80), Arabinda Banik (65), Swantana Banik (28), Arnab Banik (9), Anushka Banik (6), and two six-month-old babies and their mother Sutapa Jana. The house belonged to the brothers Chandra Kanta Banik and Tushar Banik.

The West Bengal Police have filed a case against the two brothers under Sections 287, 288, 125, 110, 105 and 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyay Samhita and Sections 24 and 25 of the West Bengal Fire Service Act, 1950.

Xi Jinping calls for 'elephant-dragon duet' on 75th anniversary of ties between India, China

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of India-China bilateral relations, Chinese President Xi Jinping in a congratulatory message to President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said the two countries should "realise a cooperative *pas de deux* of the dragon and the elephant", which completely serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples.

Vikram Misri and Xu Feihong at an event organised by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi on Tuesday. DINAKAR PERI

Ms. Murmu, in her message, said that "stable, predictable and amicable" bilateral relations will bring benefits to both nations and the world.

Later in the day, speaking at a commemorative event organised by the Chinese Embassy, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said it is "our wish and desire" to use this occasion as an opportunity to "rebuild" India-China relations.

Chinese envoy Xu Feihong said in his speech that Mr. Xi emphasised that both sides should view and handle China-India relations from a "strategic and long-term perspective, and seek ways for neighbouring major countries to get along in peaceful coexistence, mutual trust and mutual benefit as well as common development".

Mr. Misri, who has served as India's envoy in Beijing, said the bilateral relationship is an important one as two large neighbours in an important part of the world, and the stable ties between the two countries would contribute to humanity as a whole. In this regard, he said the durable basis for rebuilding the ties is the three-point pillar of "mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests".

"The path forward maybe a difficult one, but it is one that we are prepared to work. And it is on the basis of these steps that we have already taken in the last five months that we have seen promising beginnings, which we should turn into tangible benefit for the people of our two countries," he said.

Mr. Xi termed India and China "ancient civilisations, major developing countries and important members of the Global South", and noted that both countries are at a critical stage in their respective modernisation drive.

According to the envoy, Mr. Xi expressed his readiness to work with Ms. Murmu to promote strategic mutual trust, deepen communication and "coordination on major international affairs, jointly safeguard peace and tranquillity" in border regions.

U.P. parties welcome SC order on demolitions

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh targeted the Adityanath government over the Supreme Court's Tuesday order on the illegal demolition of five houses in 2021, stating that the ruling highlighted a lack of adherence to the rule of law.

Welcoming the verdict, Samajwadi Party spokesperson Ram Pratap Singh said, "The SP has always opposed hasty bulldozer action."

The Congress called for stricter regulations from the court to prevent arbitrary demolitions, and urged for effective, time-bound remedies.

EC wraps up consultative meetings with parties

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has held nearly 5,000 meetings at the grassroots level with political parties across the country on all pending issues, including the updating of electoral rolls.

The meetings come amid allegations of duplicate voter IDs and electoral roll manipulations from many political parties.

The engagements aim to resolve any pending issues by the competent authorit within the existing legal framework. Any issue, if unresolved within the existing legal framework, will be taken up by the Commission.

Kamra shares satirical guide on silencing artists

Abhinay Deshpande
S. Prasad
MUMBAI/VILLUPURAM

Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra on Tuesday posted a scathing five-point guide titled "How to Kill an Artist: A Step-by-Step Guide" on X, taking aim at the backlash he has faced over his recent show, which allegedly targeted Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

Mr. Kamra's viral YouTube video "Naya Bharat", released last week, sparked political outrage over a remark perceived as calling Mr. Shinde a "traitor". Shiv Sena workers vandalised the venue where the show was filmed, and three FIRs have been lodged against Mr. Kamra in Mumbai.

In his post, he outlined escalating steps to suppress dissent: from "1. Outrage just enough for brands to stop commissioning their work." to "5. Summon their audience for questioning–turning art into a crime scene."

"Now the artist is left with only two choices: Sell their soul and become a dollar puppet – or wither in silence. This isn't just a playbook, it's a political weapon. A silencing machine," he concluded.

Reports had claimed that attendees of Mr. Kamra's show were issued police notices, but an official denied such claims.

Meanwhile, Mr. Kamra skipped a second summons from the Khar Police, who visited his former Mahim residence – a move he mocked on X.

Abiding by the directions of the Madras High Court that granted him interim anticipatory bail in connection with a case booked against him by the Khar Police for having allegedly made slanderous comments against Mr. Shinde, Mr. Kamra on Tuesday appeared before the judicial magistrate court at Vanur in Villupuram district and executed a bond with two sureties.

ATF, commercial LPG rates cut

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The price of jet fuel, or ATF, was on Tuesday cut by a steep 6.1% and the rates of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants were reduced by ₹41 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with benchmark international prices.

The reduction negates the increase in prices effected since February.

The ATF price in Mumbai was cut to ₹83,575.42, while those in Chennai and Kolkata were reduced to ₹92,503.80 and ₹91,921 per kl, respectively, from ₹84,511.93 per kl previously.

The rate of cooking gas remained unchanged at ₹803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

APPEAL

Harshini is 13 years old suffering from heart ailment. She requires Complex Open Heart Surgery (VSD Closure) at The Madras Medical Mission, Chennai. The total expenditure is Rs.9,50,350/-. Her family is extremely poor and finding it difficult to afford this huge cost. Please help her to have a bright future. The donations sent through Ch/D.D/M.O/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLEPAY (Canara Bank,Nungambakkam Branch, A/c No. 60182010063310, IFSC No: CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT. Your e-mail ID is requested.

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No. 29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401/ 31523781/ 7338978027.**

E-mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com.

Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org.

WWS

India, Chile have started talks for trade pact: Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India and Chile have started discussions on a "mutually beneficial and comprehensive" trade pact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on Tuesday. This came after State-owned copper mining firms from the two countries signed a pact that will expand Chile's access to the mining market in India.

While welcoming Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font, he raised current international disputes, and said they should be resolved peacefully through dialogue. "In today's discussion, we have identified several new initiatives that will deepen relations over the next decade," he said.

President Boric arrived here on Tuesday and met External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar before proceeding to Hyderabad House for delegation-level talks.

NDA, INDIA bloc gird up for debate on Waqf Bill in Lok Sabha today

Numbers are heavily in favour of the ruling alliance for the passage of the Bill; Opposition members walk out of the House Business Advisory Committee meeting following disagreements over the time allotted for discussions on the legislation

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha is all set to witness a face-off between the Treasury and Opposition benches on Wednesday as the House will take up the Waqf (Amendment) Bill for discussion and passage.

The Bill brought the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance bloc together with the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, and his Rajya Sabha counterpart, Mallikarjun Kharge, holding a meeting of the floor leaders on Tuesday evening to evolve a joint strategy.

While the Narendra Modi government is determined to pass the Bill, the Opposition, which has called it "unconstitutional", is equally determined to put up a stiff resistance. The Congress has issued a three-line whip, asking all its members to be present for the next three days.

The police patrolling an area in Varanasi. Security has been beefed up in various areas as Parliament is set to take up the Waqf Bill. PTI

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, who holds charge of the Minority Affairs Ministry, will move the Bill for passage. He said the Lok Sabha's Business Advisory Committee (BAC) agreed on an eight-hour debate, but it could be extended after taking the sense of the House.

Earlier, Opposition members walked out of the BAC meeting, presided over by Speaker Om Birla, following disagreements over the time allotted for the debate and other issues.

'Stifling our voice'

The Congress's Deputy Leader in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, said the Opposition parties wanted more time to debate the Waqf Bill, and wanted the House to take up more issues, including the situation in Manipur and the row over duplication of elector photo identity card numbers. He accused the government of stifling the Opposition's voice.

However, the political heat and length of the debate are unlikely to have any bearing on the final outcome as the numbers heavily favour the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance in the Lok Sabha.

Mr. Gogoi alleged that the government was "bulldozing its agenda through and there is no space for the Opposition".

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen chief Asaduddin Owaisi said he would show how the Bill was "unconstitutional" when he expressed his views in the House. "This Bill is aimed at curbing the religious freedom of Muslims," he said. "The people will teach BJP's allies like Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Janata Dal-United (JDU) a lesson".

With the JD(U) and TDP pledging their support, the NDA has a comfortable majority with 293 MPs.

JD(U) says Waqf Bill should not be given retrospective effect

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

> We hope that the govt. will consider it...As long as Nitish Kumar is in politics, the interests of the people will be protected
>
> **SANJAY K. JHA**
> Rajya Sabha MP

A day before the Waqf (Amendment) Bill is set to be tabled in Lok Sabha, key National Democratic Alliance (NDA) allies expressed support for the legislation, though the Janata Dal(U) urged the government not to implement the Bill with retrospective effect and the Telugu Desam Party, while backing the Bill, chose not to speak on the finer details till it is placed in the House.

According to sources, the Bharatiya Janata Party has reached out to the allies, briefing them on the recommendations of Parliament's Joint Committee that have been incorporated in the amended Bill.

JD(U) working president and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay K. Jha said the Bill should not be implemented with retrospective effect. He chose to add a caveat saying that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the JD(U) had been committed to the welfare of minorities.

"Nitish Kumar has been working in Bihar for the past 19 years. During this time, the work he has done for the Muslim community is also visible. Our party had said that it should not be implemented with retrospective effect, and we hope that the government will consider it... As long as Nitish Kumar is in politics, the interests of the people will be protected," he said. Underplaying the controversy surrounding the Bill, Mr. Jha said the Waqf Bill was not coming for the first time, and had come out as an amended Bill in 2013. The JD(U) has 12 members in the Lok Sabha.

The LJP (Ram Vilas), which has five members, took a more supportive stance as it chose to attack the Opposition's "misleading" narrative. Lok Sabha member Arun Bharti, who was part of the Joint Committee, said: "We condemn the way the Opposition is continuously trying to mislead people in the name of religion to save its vote bank politics." He accused the Opposition of focusing only on one aspect of the Bill, ignoring the administrative, social and economic sides.

TDP's stand

The TDP with 16 MPs will vote in favour of the Bill. A senior party leader said that being in government, the party could not take contradictory stances on the legislation. TDP spokesperson Prem Kumar Jain said: "The whole Muslim community is waiting for the Waqf (Amendment) Bill to be tabled... Our party will support it. [TDP chief and Andhra Pradesh CM] Chandrababu Naidu has already mentioned that we will work in the interests of the Muslim community."

No protest, no walkout: INDIA bloc plans to debate Waqf Bill, press for voting

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The INDIA bloc parties, at a meeting on Tuesday, unanimously decided not to hold protests, including walkouts, but to take part in the debate and press for a vote on the contentious Waqf (Amendment) Bill in both Houses of Parliament to force the NDA allies and fence sitters to take a position on the legislation.

The meeting was attended by 36 members from 22 Opposition parties. All parties have decided to issue a whip to their members for the next three days.

The Bill aimed at reforming the Waqf administration is being opposed by the INDIA bloc parties for the changes it has introduced, including the inclusion of non-Muslim members on the Waqf Board and Central Waqf Council and giving more powers to District Collectors. All 11 Opposition members of Parliament's Joint Committee had moved dissent notes that the Bill will open new disputes and endanger Waqf properties.

Plan of action: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and others during a meeting of the floor leaders of the INDIA bloc in New Delhi. PTI

As per sources, a member from South India suggested that Muslim MPs be fielded to raise the issue. This suggestion was rejected.

Many members, including the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, opined that this legislation should not be bracketed as a Muslim versus Hindu issue. Instead, it should be called out for violating the "spirit and principle of Constitution". "It is a BJP versus Constitution issue," Mr. Gandhi reportedly said. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge supplemented the view by saying that this legislation may be targeted at Muslims, but other minorities too are in danger.

Senior CPI(M) leader John Brittas suggested coordination with non-INDIA parties such as the Biju Janata Dal, YSRCP and Bharat Rashtra Samithi who together have 18 MPs in Rajya Sabha to oppose the Bill.

Beneficiaries being left out due to lack of Census data, Kharge says in Rajya Sabha

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday urged the government to immediately start the Census.

Speaking during Zero Hour in the House, he expressed concern over the delay in conducting the decadal count, and said that in the absence of the latest population data, several eligible beneficiaries were facing exclusion.

The Congress leader said India had been conducting the Census every 10 years since 1881.

"Even during major events like World War II and the India-Pakistan war of 1971-72, the Census was conducted. "But it is unfortunate that for the first time in history, the government has made a record delay [in conducting the Census," he said.

He stressed the need for a caste census. Invoking Mahatma Gandhi's words before the 1931 census when the caste census was conducted along with the regular population count, he said Gandhi*ji* had said, "We need periodic medical check-ups to assess our health, a census is the most important check-up for a nation."

Mallikarjun Kharge

'A crucial exercise'

The Census, Mr. Kharge said, is a crucial exercise and involved a large number of people who collect data not just on population but also on employment, family structures, socio-economic conditions, and several other key aspects.

Along with the general Census, a caste census was possible because the government already collected data on Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), so it could collect data on other castes as well, he said. He said no clear statement was being made by the government regarding the Census.

Mr. Kharge said this year's Budget had allocated only ₹575 crore for the Census which shows the government was unwilling to conduct it, adding that delaying the Census had serious consequences.

Mr. Kharge said many surveys and welfare programmes relied on census data. Policies drafted in absence of reliable and up-to-date data make them arbitrary and ineffective. "Due to the delay in the census, a large number of people are being left out of welfare schemes," he said.

SC refuses plea on Sabarmati Ashram

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a petition filed by Mahatma Gandhi's great-grandson raising concerns over a project by the Gujarat government to renovate Sabarmati Ashram.

A Bench dismissed the petition filed by Tushar Gandhi, who had contended the project was envisaged in a manner contrary to the spirit and ethos of Gandhian simplicity.

The court referred to a delay in filing the appeal against a decision of the Gujarat High Court. It orally told Mr. Gandhi, that he was at liberty to approach the court in case the undertaking was violated.

Move SEBI for transparency in FPIs, AIFs, SC tells Mahua

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra to make a representation to the Securities and Exchange Board of India seeking public disclosure of norms for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) and alternative investment funds (AIFs).

A Bench disposed of the petition, which sought transparency and investor awareness in financial markets by mandating public disclosure of the ultimate beneficial owners' details and portfolio holdings of AIFs and FPIs.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for Ms. Moitra, urged the court to put SEBI on a deadline to respond to the proposed representation. The Bench said the petitioner was free to take action according to law if it did not respond within a "reasonable time".

Lok Sabha disrupted briefly as Trinamool and SP stage protests

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha was briefly disrupted on Tuesday when members belonging to the Samajwadi Party and the Trinamool Congress protested over different issues.

Members of the Samajwadi Party raised the attack on the residence of its party MP Ramji Lal Suman over his recent remarks on Rajput ruler Rana Sanga. They also wanted to mention the recent stopping of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav's convoy.

The Trinamool Congress wanted to raise the issue of the transfer of a judge.

Om Birla.

'Raised slogans'

As soon as Zero Hour began, some Opposition members stood in the aisles seeking to raise the issues. The Samajwadi Party members displayed placards, while the Trinamool MPs shouted slogans.

Speaker Om Birla asked the Opposition MPs to go back to their seats, and said he would give Mr. Yadav the opportunity to raise issues after papers were laid in the House during Zero Hour.

The Speaker said that displaying placards and sloganeering were not allowed in the House.

As the Opposition members continued to protest, Mr. Birla adjourned the House till 2 p.m.

(With PTI inputs)

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER
HITES on behalf of NLC India Limited invites online bids for **Establishment of NLCIL's Integrated Township, Administrative Office and Other Allied Infrastructures in Sambalpur District, Odisha on EPC Basis**. Estimated Cost **Rs.524,50,99,842/- (Incl. GST)**.
For submission & other details bidders are advised to regularly visit **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app** and **www.hllhites.com** as corrigendum/ amendments etc., if any, will be notified on this portal only and separate newspaper advertisement will not be made for this.
VP (ID) HITES South Operations

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT
e-Tender Call Notice No.AD/OE/GL-72/ 15(Pt.V)/546 Dtd. 20.03.2025
Name of the work :-"Watch & ward of Port properties at different sites of PPA round the clock for a period of one year". Estimated cost put to tender ₹ 3,60,96,807.00 (excluding GST @ 18% & Contractor's Commission). The last date & time of submission of bid is 09.04.2025 upto 1700 Hrs. for details please refer our website: www.paradipport.gov.in / https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.
Asst. Secretary (Admn.), Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/71/2024-25, Dt.28/03/25

ANDHRA PRADESH CAPITAL REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
LENIN CENTRE, GOVERNORPET, VIJAYAWADA-520002(A.P.)
E Procurement Tender Notice
NIT No. 121/CRDA-14023(41)/4/2018-AEO2-LSE-APCRDA Dated:26.03.2025
Name of Work :APCRDA-" Establishment, Operation & Maintenance of Low Cost Real-Time/Continuous On-line Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station.
The bid can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from **02.04.2025 to 16.04.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs.** Due date for submission of Bid is **16.04.2025 up to 15.00 Hrs,** Technical bid opening **16.04.2025 @16.00 Hrs.** For further details Please refer to **www.apeprocurement.gov.in and www.crda.ap.gov.in**
Sd/- Commissioner, APCRDA,Vijayawada.

JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) –U40109RJ2000SGC016483
OFFICE OF THE IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM CELL) Regd. Office : New Power House, Jodhpur- 342003
E-Mail : xenredsmjdvvnl@gmail.com, sedsmju@gmail.com, Website : www.jdvvnl.com
E-PROCUREMENT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
Expression of Interest (EOI) are invited for design, survey, supply, installation, testing, commissioning, operation & maintenance for 25 years from COD of grid connected solar power plants through RESCO mode, its associated 11 kV line to connect the plant with various 33/11 kV sub-stations and remote monitoring system (RMS) of solar power plants under PM-KUSUM Scheme - Component A in various Circles of Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited against EOI-TN-DSM-84 to EOI-TN-DSM-109 (UBN No. JVV2425WSOB01173 to JVV2425WSOB01198). All the details regarding tender is available at web site **www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** vide EOI No. JDVVNL/IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM)/EOI-TN-DSM-84 to EOI-TN-DSM-109.
In future any other notices/information regarding corrigendum/extension, if any, shall be published only at web sites: **www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.**
Raj.Samwad/C/25/17 IN-CHARGE (RE-DSM CELL)
बिजली संबंधी शिकायतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर 1800 180 6045

Government of Karnataka
Department of Collegiate and Technical Education
NO. 1, Unnatha Shikshana Soudha, Sheshadri Road, Bangalore – 560 001
Phone: 080-22223906, email: dce.tender2017@gmail.com
No.: DCE/ITS/PUR/6/2025-INFO (Computer No.1731619) Date: 01.04.2025
E-Tender Notification
The Commissioner for Collegiate and Technical Education, Bangalore hereby invites bids in Two-Cover system through e-Procurement portal from eligible bidders for the following Tender. The Tender Documents with detailed terms and conditions may be obtained from the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**
Tender Schedules are as below

Sl. No.	Tender Name & Number	Date of Floating Tender on e- Procurement Portal	Date and Time of pre-bid meeting	Last date and Time for bidding through eprocurement portal
1.	**Tender No: DCE/2024-25/IND0055** "Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Science Lab Equipment to Government First Grade Colleges under PM-USHA"	01.04.2025	05.04.2025 11.00 AM	17.04.2025 5.30 PM
2.	**Tender No: DCE/2024-25/IND0056** "Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Sports Equipment to Government First Grade Colleges of the Department of Collegiate and Technical Education under PM-USHA"	01.04.2025	05.04.2025 02.00 PM	17.04.2025 5.30 PM

DIPR/CP/03/Zen/2025-26
Sd/-
Director of Collegiate and Technical Education, Bangalore

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
Notice Inviting Bid
(A) Bid No.BN-9018002442(UBN: VPN2425WLOB03884) for Construction of 220/132 kV, 1X200 MVA Substation at LAMBA JATAN (Upgradation) (Distt.-Nagaur) along with associated Bays in Rajasthan including survey, supply of all equipment's/material, erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning (On Turnkey Project) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 06.05.2025.
(B) Bid No.BN-9018002443(UBN: VPN2425WLOB03885) for Construction of various transmission elements (01 nos. 220 kV & 03 nos. 132 kV Transmission lines) for 220 kV GSS Lamba Jatan (Upgradation) (Distt. Nagaur) including survey, supply of all Equipments/Materials, Erection (including civil works), Testing and Commissioning (On Turnkey basis) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 06.05.2025.
Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the state; and **http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl** departmental website.
RRVPN/TR-6748/2025
Raj.Samwad/C/25/20
Superintending Engineer (Contracts-I), Jaipur

INBRIEF

Field hospital by Indian Army operationalised in Mandalay

The field hospital being set up by the Indian Army's 90 Para Brigade in Mandalay has been successfully operationalised. The 200-bed hospital can provide surgical and in-patient care. A fifth naval ship, *INS Gharial*, with 440 tonnes of relief material, including rice, edible oil and medicines, sailed out of the Visakhapatnam harbour on Tuesday morning, and is expected to reach Yangon late on April 4 or early on April 5. This is part of India's support offered under 'Operation Brahma' to earthquake-hit Myanmar. Myo Aung, the Chief Minister of Mandalay, visited the facility and reviewed its capabilities on Tuesday morning, Indian Army officials said.

Parliament passes Bill to set up university for cooperation

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed the Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill to establish the first national university for cooperation, converting the Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat (IRMA), into a Central University. Replying to the debate on the Bill, Minister of State for Cooperation Murlidhar Mohol said the Bill will ensure that adequately trained professionals will be available in the sector in the coming years. The Bill is named after Tribhuvan Das Patel, one of the founders of the Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which is known as Amul. The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on March 26.

Six districts 'most-affected' by left-wing extremism: Shah

Four of the districts are in Chhattisgarh and one each in West Bengal and Maharashtra; the Union government is determined to uproot Maoist groups for good by 2026, says Home Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Red alert: Security personnel after their encounter with Maoists at the Farsegarh jungle in Bijapur in Chhattisgarh in February . PTI

In significant changes to the red corridor in the country, the number of districts "most-affected" by left-wing extremism has reduced to six from 12, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

In a post on X, Mr. Shah said the Modi government was building a "*Sashakt* (strong), *Surakshit* (safe), and *Samriddh* (prosperous) Bharat" with a ruthless approach to Naxalism and relentless efforts for all-pervasive development. "Bharat is determined to uproot Naxalism for good by March 31, 2026," he said.

According to the Home Ministry, the number of districts affected by Naxalism has reduced to 18 from the earlier 38.

"Among these, the number of most-affected districts has reduced to six from 12, number of districts of concern has also come down to six from nine, and number of other affected districts has also been reduced from 17 to six," the Home Ministry said in a statement.

The six most-affected districts are Bijapur, Kanker, Narayanpur, and Sukma in Chhattisgarh; West Singhbhum in Jharkhand; and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra.

Districts of concern

The districts of concern, where additional resources need to be intensively provided beyond the severely affected districts, are Alluri Sitarama Raju in Andhra Pradesh; Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh; Kalahandi, Kandhamal, and Malkangiri in Odisha; and Bhadradri Kothagudem in Telangana.

The other affected districts are Dantewada, Gariaband, and Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki in Chhattisgarh; Latehar in Jharkhand; Nuapada in Odisha; and Mulugu in Telangana.

Financial assistance

The most-affected districts and the districts of concern are given financial assistance of ₹30 crore and ₹10 crore, respectively, by the Government of India under the Special Central Assistance scheme to fill the gaps in public infrastructure. Special projects are also provided to the districts as per the requirement, the Ministry said.

"The rapid improvement in the LWE scenario in the last one year is primarily due to the establishment of new security camps in the insurgency-affected core areas and development-oriented works such as expansion of roads, transport facilities, water, electricity and other welfare schemes of the government reaching the villagers," it added.

Rajya Sabha passes Bill for resolving airline-lessor disputes

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

K. Rammohan Naidu

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed the Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025 that seeks to turn into law provisions of an international treaty governing disputes between airlines and lessors of aircraft and engines.

Referring to past disputes over unpaid dues to lessors, such as those involving SpiceJet and the now-defunct Go First that emanated from challenges in interpreting the Cape Town Convention and Protocol by courts in the absence of a uniform legislation posing a roadblock for lessors who could not repossess their aircraft and remove them from the country, Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu told the Rajya Sabha, "With this Bill, we aim to bring much-needed clarity. We hope it will provide a significant boost to the leasing industry, which is the need of the hour. The industry urgently requires this legislation."

The Minister also underlined that with the Bill providing "security" for the lessor and lessee, the airlines have informed him that leasing costs were expected to decline by 8-10%, which he maintained would also have a trickle-down advantage for passengers because of lower airfares.

He said over 86% of the nearly 850 aircraft in the fleet of various domestic airlines were leased. Airlines often lease aircraft from a third party instead of outright purchase in order to preserve liquidity.

The Bill recognises the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as the authority that can issue necessary directions for implementing the provisions of the Convention.

The Cape Town Convention is an international treaty that aims to standardise transactions involving movable property, particularly high-value assets like aircraft, engines, and helicopters, to ensure creditors can enforce their rights in case of default.

Kashi, Mathura efforts are fine, but how far back do we go to dig up history, asks Hosabale

NEWS ANALYSIS

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

Observers say that Hosabale's comments are meant to balance two countervailing forces in the Sangh

The second-in-command of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Dattatreya Hosabale, in comments to the Kannada magazine *Vikrama*, a mouthpiece of the Sangh, has said that the organisation would have no objections if its members participated in efforts concerning the Krishna Janmabhoomi issue in Mathura, and the Gyanvapi mosque dispute in Varanasi.

"At that time [1984], the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad), saints, and seers spoke of three temples. If a section of our *swayamsevaks* (volunteers) want to join forces in the case of these three temples [including the Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya], then we will not stop them," Mr. Hosabale said. In a transcribed copy of the interview, available with *The Hindu*, Mr. Hosabale also then goes on to clarify what he meant.

"But if we talk about all the other mosques and structures, should we start digging up 30,000 mosques and attempt to reverse history? Would we not create more hostility and resentment in society?" he asked.

Observers said Mr. Hosabale's comments are meant to balance two countervailing forces within the Sangh. One force is that of drawing a line under the temple movements where, for the first time, in the 1980s, the RSS had supported the movement for the construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. This was exemplified in RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's comments, which came after the Ram Janmabhoomi verdict, that the RSS would not get involved in any other movement of the kind.

The second force is of the existing Hindutva constituency. The slogan during the Ram Janmabhoomi movement – "Ayodhya *to kewal jhaanki hai*, Mathura Kashi *baaki hai*" (Ayodhya is just a trailer, Kashi and Mathura are still to be) – which included the two other disputes in the same pantheon as Ayodhya, continues to appeal to the Hindutva base.

CPI(M) party congress in Madurai will be politically significant: N. Ram

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI

N. Ram, veteran journalist and Director of The Hindu Group, and CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat and other party leaders in Madurai on Tuesday. MOORTHY G.

"The draft political resolution of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s party congress, which notes that the Hindutva-corporate nexus displays neo-fascist characteristics, is a very important and new observation," N. Ram, veteran journalist and Director of The Hindu Group, said in Madurai on Tuesday.

Inaugurating exhibitions ahead of the CPI(M)'s 24th party congress being held from April 2 to 6, Mr. Ram said he believed that the various aspects of the observation would be discussed in the party congress and would create a debate among the public.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat, State secretary P. Shanmugam and Madurai MP Su. Venkatesan were present.

Though the Left parties seemed to be facing an electoral setback, Communists have set the agenda for discussion on several issues, Mr. Ram said.

"Some of the important issues like federalism, trade union rights, welfare schemes and issues pertaining to working class people are spoken about and raised only by the Communist parties," he observed.

Recalling former CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat's statement that the party should display its independence even when in an alliance with others, Mr. Ram said such views were important for the party to remain distinct from the other parties.

Noting that Madurai plays an important role in the event, Mr. Ram said that next to Kolkata – which had hosted the party congress four times, Madurai stood second by hosting the national event for the third time.

"While the third congress of the Communist Party of India (CPI) was held here in 1953, CPI(M)'s ninth conference was held in 1972. The 24th congress holds political significance and is much expected by everyone," Mr. Ram stated.

In her address, Ms. Karat said, "Our former and late general secretary Sitaram Yechury always said that the CPI(M) works on two legs, one which fights against capitalist aggression and exploitation of the working class, and the other which moves forward against toxic caste system and social oppression which exists even today."

Enforcement agencies must stay updated, says Vaishnaw

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Law enforcement agencies should be aware of societal changes under way in India, Union Railway, Electronics and Information Technology, and Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday. He was delivering the D.P. Kohli Memorial Lecture on the foundation day of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

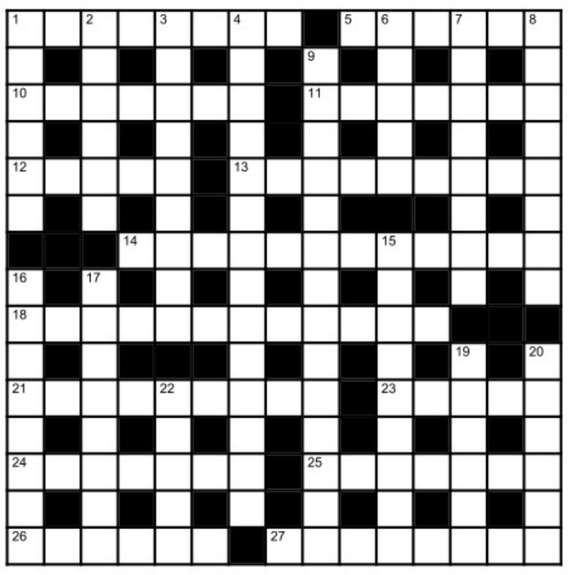
"When a country is growing at 6-8%, the rapid growth brings changes in the system," he said, adding that "when change happens, the context of investigation changes". He said that some archaic laws from the "Licence Raj" have been removed. "That mindset change is what really is required in today's context," he noted.

TH CROSSWORD + 14448

(set by Hypatia)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Try rounding up crowds in South Indian temple towers (8)
5 European chose nuts for parrots (6)
10 Discharges captain losing semifinals, perhaps (7)
11 One left in cycling division's fastest (7)
12 Different from extremely outright woman (5)
13 Diaries in craft corners, per Spooner (9)
14 Ate without folding her seat down (12)
18 Process for plating oyster cell is complicated (12)
21 Greeting from the Spanish web domain in Zoom (9)
23 Warrior discovering gun in Jammu (5)
24 Fix rent including new lock (7)
25 Everyone joining say, troops returning quickly (7)
26 Asterix's infinitely funny caricature (6)
27 Divine sightings of *Sant* at his errands, reflecting regularly (8)

Down

1 Capacity of old historical ship out of Europe (6)
2 Person's spirit - yet captures his emotions, basically! (6)
3 Progressive terms for relocating outside India (9)
4 Those who hate people avoid taking this part on cast (14)
6 Setter's inspecting constant weight scale (5)
7 Private phone too near beds (3-2-3)
8 Reserve ideas (3-5)
9 Protest march from yard in Agra has at last been defused (4,10)
15 Complex relationships and mix-ups involving Romeo at Italy (9)
16 Social groups for fishing and macrame? (8)
17 Strangely knew about students at technology firm (4-4)
19 Central letters hidden in magazine's cryptic puzzle (6)
20 Bill recalled working at small clubs (6)
22 Labourer spending time in fuel tanker (5)

SUDOKU

		3	5				8	4
8	2		3			7	1	
	4						9	
					7		5	
4				3				8
	8		9					
	5						2	
	9	6			4		3	5
2	7				3	4		

No.SS6477 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	5	7	9	4	3	2	1	6
1	9	6	5	2	7	4	3	8
4	3	2	6	1	8	9	5	7
9	6	8	4	3	5	7	2	1
3	7	4	2	6	1	8	9	5
2	1	5	8	7	9	6	4	3
5	4	1	7	9	6	3	8	2
7	2	3	1	8	4	5	6	9
6	8	9	3	5	2	1	7	4

FAITH

Maricha's advice

Akampana, the only asura who escapes when Rama kills the demons of Janasthana, suggests that Ravana should abduct Sita, for this is the only way to deprive Rama of His strength. Ravana leaves Lanka to carry out Akampana's suggestion, said Navalpakkam Vasudevachariar in a discourse. He arrives at the ashram of Maricha. Maricha is the son of Tataka, the demoness, killed by Rama. Maricha welcomes Ravana, who is his king. Ravana seeks Maricha's help in carrying out the abduction of Sita.

Maricha asks Ravana who gave him such an idea. It cannot be someone well disposed towards him. It must be someone who wants Ravana's downfall, for no one who cares for Ravana will ask him to do something that will surely destroy him. Who is this enemy of yours, who has given you such bad advice, asks Maricha. He says that what Ravana has been asked to do is as dangerous as extracting the poisonous fangs of a snake. The man who gave Ravana such advice is not to be trusted. He might crush Ravana to death while the latter is asleep. It is the height of foolishness to challenge Rama thus. Rama has an impeccable lineage. He is morally upright. He is a man with powerful shoulders. Will anyone wake up a sleeping lion? Will the enraged animal not tear to bits the one who disturbed it? Rama has not tried to fight Ravana, and should be left alone. To provoke Him and rouse His anger would be suicidal. Rama is a Nrisimha – a man-lion, says Maricha. His arrows are lethal, and there is no chance of escape for one who angers Him. Maricha offers convincing, logical arguments to keep Ravana from incurring Rama's wrath.

INBRIEF

Gross GST collections rose 10% in March 2025: CBIC

Gross goods and services tax (GST) collections increased 9.9% to ₹1.96 lakh crore in March 2025 as against ₹1.78 lakh crore in the same month last year, according to data from Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) released on April 1. This is the highest since April 2024, when gross GST collections were slightly higher at ₹2.01 lakh crore. Net GST collections increased 7.3% to ₹1.76 lakh crore as against ₹1.64 lakh crore in the year earlier period.

Sugar production expected to be 12% lower than last season

Sugar production till March in the current marketing season is 18% lower than last sugar season, after diversion for ethanol, according to the Indian Sugar and Bio Energy Manufacturers Association. The total production so far (October 2024 to March 2025) is 247 lakh tonnes. The diversion for ethanol in 2023-2024 sugar season was 19 lakh tonnes and this year it is expected to be 33 lakh tonnes. So, the total production for this season is likely to be 12% lower than last year.

Morepen gets nod for anti-allergy API Loratadine

Active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) maker Morepen Laboratories has received approval for anti-allergy API Loratadine from the Center for Drug Evaluation of China's National Medical Products Administration (NMPA). China represents a vast growth opportunity and the approval will enable the company to meet a rising demand for high-quality antihistamine and anti-allergy APIs, director - sales and marketing Kushal Suri said on Tuesday.

RBI to buy ₹80,000 crore government securities

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday announced the injection of ₹80,000 crore by purchasing government securities citing "evolving liquidity conditions."

The open market operation would be made in four tranches of ₹20,000 crore each on April 3, April 8, April 22 and April 29, the RBI said in a statement. As of March 27, banking sector liquidity was at ₹13,000 crore, according to Kotak Institutional Equities data.

FM denies any cuts in capital expenditure

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Denying any cuts to capital expenditure, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the Rajya Sabha that it had gone up to ₹11.21 lakh crore for the 2025-26 fiscal.

Senior Congress leader and former finance minister P. Chidambaram, quoting from the Union Budget, pointed out that capital expenditure for FY25 in the revised Budget Estimate was cut down to ₹10,18,429 crore from ₹11.11 lakh crore and sought the reason.

He also claimed that the special assistance to States was reduced to ₹2,99,891 crore in the revised Budget Estimate from ₹3,90,778 crore for FY25.

U.S. flags India's 'burdensome' requirements ahead of tariffs

India's import standards arbitrary, not globally aligned, import quality requirements rising since 2019, says Office of the U.S. Trade Representative; non-tariff barriers a pressure point in trade talks

Reuters
NEW DELHI

The United States has flagged concerns over India's increasing and burdensome import-quality requirements, among its many barriers to trade, in a report released two days before planned U.S. reciprocal tariffs take effect.

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative on Monday provided an encyclopedic list of foreign countries' policies and regulations it regards as barriers.

Last month, *Reuters* reported India was open to cutting tariffs on more than half of U.S. imports worth $23 billion, the biggest cut in years. Still, the U.S. has concerns that some of India's import requirements are not internationally aligned, and that some are burdensome or lack clear timelines, the Trump administration said in its latest USTR report. It wasn't clear if Trump's April 2 announcement on tariffs would factor in the findings of the USTR report.

Since 2019, India has made many Bureau of India Standards (BIS) standards mandatory for quality control in sectors including chemicals, medical devices, batteries, electronics, food and textiles, the USTR said.

India's draft rules for its so-called Digital Personal Data Protection Act released last month could require disclosure of personal data to the Indian government, restrict cross-border data transfer and may allow data localisation, the USTR said.

Obstacle course

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative lists foreign countries' policies it regards as barriers

- India open to cutting tariffs on more than half of U.S. imports worth $23 billion
- U.S. feels some of India's import requirements lack clear timelines
- It is unclear if Trump's April 2 announcement will factor in the USTR report findings

Credit rating agencies cautious on U.S. tariff impact on corporates

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Credit rating agencies are largely upbeat on corporate India's credit profile due to lower debt and higher profitability, but have maintained caution on the effect the U.S. tariffs could have on financial performances.

ICRA had upgraded twice the number of companies they downgraded in fiscal 2025 and this stayed more or less the same in fiscal 2024.

India Ratings, too, kept the share of companies it upgraded at 19% in the past two fiscals. The share of companies that India Ratings downgraded reduced to 5% in fiscal 2025 from 7% in the year earlier.

An overall reduction of leveraging, rising profitability in financial sector, improving risk profile of investment and buoyant demand in some sectors contributed to the strong financials, ICRA said.

M&M, Toyota, Kia report double-digit growth in March sales

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Almost all auto companies reported a positive wholesale momentum in March, according to sales data released by individual firms.

While M&M, Toyota and Kia reported double-digit growth, Maruti, Tata Passenger Vehicles and Hyundai posted a 3% growth.

Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. sold a total of 1,92,984 units as compared with 1,87,196 units a year earlier. Hyundai Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) recorded sales of 67,320 units in March, a growth of 2.6% over last year. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. announced that its overall auto sales for March 2025 stood at 83,894 vehicles, a growth of 23%.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor Ltd. reported 11% growth in March sales at 30,043 units from 27,180 units in the year-ago period. Kia India recorded domestic sales of 25,525 units in March, up 19.3% YoY.

MARKET WATCH

	TUESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	76,025	-1.80
Gold	94,150	2.17
Brent oil	74.71	—

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2335.25	19.45
Adani Ports	1174.75	-8.20
Apollo Hosp	6632.30	16.10
Asian Paints	2316.00	-24.65
Axis Bank	1085.60	-16.40
Bajaj Auto	7993.05	114.20
Bajaj Finserv	1937.10	-70.25
Bajaj Finance	8698.20	-247.40
Bharat Elec	292.00	-9.32
Bharti Airtel	1724.15	-9.25
Cipla	1444.25	2.05
Coal India	397.65	-0.55
Dr Reddys Lab	1152.20	8.00
Eicher Motors	5307.20	-40.50
Grasim Ind	2619.00	7.85
HCL Tech	1530.35	-62.15
HDFC Bank	1767.85	-60.35
HDFC Life	692.90	7.20
Hero MotoCorp	3762.05	39.10
Hindalco	663.75	-18.70
Hind Unilever	2233.85	-25.00
ICICI Bank	1318.45	-29.90
IndusInd Bank	682.70	32.85
Infosys	1526.50	-44.15
ITC	406.65	-3.10
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	230.42	2.91
JSW Steel	1056.25	-6.95
Kotak Bank	2145.90	-25.30
L&T	3436.80	-55.50
M&M	2637.90	-27.90
Maruti Suzuki	11481.10	-41.05
NestleIndia	2234.00	-16.75
NTPC	352.15	-5.45
ONGC	248.07	1.69
PowerGrid Corp	289.30	-1.05
Reliance Ind	1252.60	-22.50
SBI Life	1545.25	-2.60
State Bank	771.70	0.20
Shriram Finance Ltd.	637.45	-18.55
Sun Pharma	1698.35	-36.35
TataConsumerProduct	992.25	-9.65
Tata Motors	671.85	-2.60
Tata Steel	153.12	-1.12
TCS	3550.80	-55.35
Tech Mahindra	1395.15	-23.10
Titan	2986.95	-76.40
Trent Ltd.	5576.75	251.60
UltraTech Cement	11378.65	-130.90
Wipro	262.60	0.35
Zomato Ltd.	202.01	0.31

Jain Resource Recycling files papers for ₹2,000-cr. IPO

Jain Resource Recycling Ltd has filed draft papers with markets regulator SEBI seeking its approval to raise ₹2,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The equity shares are proposed to be listed on the BSE and NSE. PTI

NMDC FY25 iron ore output, sales slip

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

India's largest iron ore producer NMDC reported a more than 2% year-on-year dip in the output at 44.04 million tonne (MT) for 2024-25, while sales at 44.40 MT was a tad lower.

In FY24, the State-owned miner had posted a record 45.2 MT production and 44.48 MT in sales.

In March, which saw workers protest over wages, production slid almost 27% to 3.55 MT (4.86 MT).

Sales for the month increased more than 6% to 4.21 MT (3.96 MT). The company said the steady growth projects NMDC's resilience despite all odds.

Q4 sales at 12.66 MT (12.54 MT) was the highest-ever since inception. Production for the quarter stood at 13.27 MT.

"Despite challenges, NMDC's strategic planning and sustained efforts enabled us to maintain our top line in FY 2024-25. As we step into the new financial year, India's iron ore demand continues to rise, driven by lower exports and steady expansion in merchant mining," CMD Amitava Mukherjee said.

"FY26 brings us one step closer to our ambitious goal of reaching 100 MT production capacity by 2030," he said.

During fiscal ended March 31, NMDC recorded its highest-ever standalone capex of ₹3,707 crore thus demonstrating strategic foresight and strong commitment to capacity expansion, the company said.

Banks to pay same interest rates: RBI

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The rates shall be uniform across all branches, customers and there will be no discrimination

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday issued a comprehensive Master Direction (MD) related to interest rate on deposits, that has come into force with immediate effect.

As per this MD, commercial banks are mandated to pay interest on deposits (other than current account deposits) accepted or renewed by them through a comprehensive policy on interest rates on deposits duly approved by the board of directors or any committee of the board to which powers have been delegated.

"The rates shall be uniform across all branches and for all customers and there shall be no discrimination in the matter of interest paid on deposits, between one deposit and another of similar amount, accepted on the same date, at any of its offices," it said.

"The rates shall not be subject to negotiation between depositors and the bank and shall be reasonable, consistent, transparent, and available for supervisory review/ scrutiny as and when required," the RBI said in the MD.

Interest on domestic rupee savings deposits will be calculated on a daily product basis.

President flags financial fraud, cyberthreat risks as tech evolves

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

President of India Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday cautioned about the risk of financial fraud and the increasing cyberthreats in an era of rapid advancement of technology.

Speaking at the 90th anniversary function of the RBI here, the President said, "This growing concern demands constant vigilance and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been taking proactive measures strengthening safeguards and ensuring a secure banking environment."

A milestone: President Droupadi Murmu with RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra at RBI's 90th foundation day in Mumbai. ANI

She also complimented the central bank for taking innovative steps to promote sustainable finance.

"As the government leads the transition to a greener economy, the RBI has complemented this vision through measures such as the Green Deposit Framework, which directs first towards environmentally sustainable projects and the inclusion of green finance and priority sector lending to encourage banks to support eco-friendly initiatives."

In his address, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said the next decade will be crucial in shaping the financial architecture of the Indian economy.

The RBI would optimise regulatory frameworks by balancing the interests of financial stability and efficiency. It will continue to support technology.

He said the RBI would do everything required to improve the financial system by expanding its access, enhancing its efficiency and strengthening its resilience in an evolving economic landscape.

THE HINDU GROUP

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

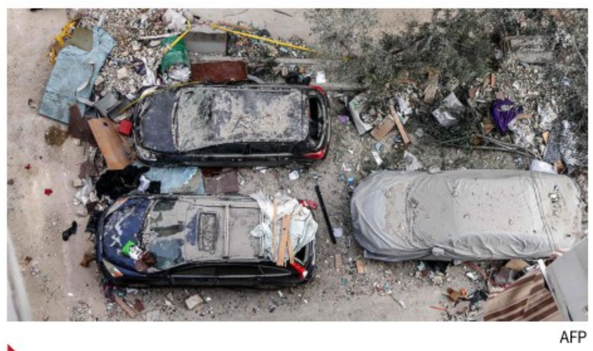
GROUND ZERO

In-depth stories from across India

Compelling stories from across India are featured in this collection from the 'Ground Zero' section of The Hindu. These capture extensive reportage of the struggles and triumphs of ordinary people in extraordinary situations.

BEIRUT

Hezbollah official among four killed in Israeli strike on Beirut



AFP

A Hezbollah official handling Palestinian affairs was among the four persons killed in an Israeli strike on Beirut on Tuesday, the second such raid on the capital during a four-month ceasefire. The attack came without warning at around 3:30 a.m. during the Id holiday marking the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramzan. AFP

DUBAI

Houthis shoot down another U.S. drone as strikes pound Yemen

REUTERS

Yemen's Houthis claimed on Tuesday that they shot down another American MQ-9 Reaper drone, even as the U.S. kept up its campaign of intense airstrikes targeting the group. The shootdown over Yemen's Marib came as airstrikes hit around Sanaa, the country's rebel-held capital, and Saada, a stronghold for the Houthis. AP

WASHINGTON

Democrats sue Donald Trump over election system overhaul bid

AP

The Democrats sued the Trump administration over a bid to impose changes on the election systems, including requiring citizenship proof to register to vote and limiting mail-in ballot counting. The lawsuit was filed in a Washington court by the Democratic National Committee, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and others. AFP

KYIV

'Almost 45,000 in Ukraine without electricity after Russian strikes'

REUTERS

Almost 45,000 people in Kherson southern Ukraine have been left without power after Russian strikes, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga told a news conference on Tuesday. The development has happened despite Kremlin's that claims it is not launching attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure. AFP

Le Pen's party gears up for protests after her poll ban

'We will take to the streets,' says RN's Jordan Bardella after Le Pen was barred from public office for 5 years; appeals court to fast track the far-right leader's case so that she could fight 2027 polls

Reuters
PARIS

Far-right party chief Jordan Bardella called on the French to rally this weekend to protest against a ruling that banned Marine Le Pen from running for public office for five years after being found guilty of embezzling European Union funds.

However, a French appeals court said on Tuesday that it would examine Ms. Le Pen's case within a timeframe that could potentially allow the far-right leader to contest the 2027 presidential election if her conviction is overturned. This could mean that the new trial would be held by early 2026 at the latest.

Tight spot: Marine Le Pen was found guilty of being 'at the heart' of a scheme to embezzle €4 million of EU funds. AP

Monday's ruling was a catastrophic setback for Ms. Le Pen, the long-time National Rally (RN) leader, who had been the front-runner in opinion polls for the 2027 presidential election. "I believe today that the French must be outraged, and I tell them: Be outraged!," Mr. Bardella told *Europe 1 radio* and *CNews TV*. "We will take to the streets this weekend. We're organising leaflet distributions, democratic, peaceful, calm mobilisations," he said.

Mr. Bardella could become the RN's de facto candidate for the 2027 election. But Ms. Le Pen made clear she was not yet ready to hand him the baton, saying on Monday: "I'm not going to let myself be eliminated like this."

Ms. Le Pen said she would appeal as soon as possible.

"We won't give in," Ms. Le Pen told RN lawmakers on Tuesday, saying that, with the ruling "the establishment" had used a "nuclear bomb" against her.

Trump's reciprocal tariff plan is unproductive, says Netherlands FM

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Hours ahead of the U.S. announcement of reciprocal tariffs, the Netherland's Foreign Minister, Caspar Veldkamp, warned that Europe's response to the tariffs would be "unitary, proportional and robust", calling for India and the EU to "compare notes" on their effects.

Speaking during a two-day visit to India, Mr. Veldkamp warned that the tariffs would be unproductive and would also have an inflationary impact on the U.S. economy.

"It is important to compare notes between the EU member states and India on these matters, because these [tariffs] affect all of us," he said in response to a question from *The Hindu* during an interaction with journalists.

Caspar Veldkamp

"We in the Netherlands, as a trading country and a trading hub, are surprised. We believe that trade contributes to the prosperity of our nations and tariffs infringe on that. In the end, they will not be beneficial for the American consumer; there will be inflationary pressure [that] these tariffs will bring to bear on the U.S. economy," Mr. Veldkamp added, stressing that all decisions on these matters would be made collectively for the EU in Brussels.

Trade talks

The U.S. tariffs due to be announced on Wednesday will be watched closely in India, which is already in talks with the U.S. for a Bilateral Trading Agreement (BTA) that is expected to push Indian tariff levels lower and open up sectors like agriculture and dairy for market access. When asked about how the Netherlands, one of the world's biggest dairy exporters, sees the BTA negotiations, Mr. Veldkamp said it would be important for the EU to see "to what extent India can come to agreements", indicating that the EU may expect similar concessions from India in the India-EU Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA), which is being negotiated simultaneously.

The Dutch Foreign Minister held meetings with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, where a number of trade, investment, defence, and security issues are on the agenda, along with talks on "semiconductors, digital technologies, renewable energy" and other areas, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

The Netherlands is a global leader in semiconductor processing equipment, with companies like ASML and NXP. The Netherlands and India will sign an MoU on Semi-Con and Critical Technology later this year when the Dutch Foreign Trade Minister leads a delegation to Delhi, Mr. Veldkamp said.

EU has 'strong plan' in place for Trump tariffs; U.K. not to take retaliatory measures

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

On the eve of U.S. President Donald Trump's sweeping 'reciprocal tariffs' on April 2, the EU and the U.K. had starkly contrasting responses planned, with the EU gearing up for retaliation and the latter bracing for impact and deciding for now not to impose retaliatory tariffs as it hopes to reach a deal with Mr. Trump.

On Tuesday, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the bloc was considering the use of all of its policy instruments in response to Mr. Trump's move.

"Europe has not started this confrontation. We do not necessarily want to retaliate, but we have a strong plan to retaliate if necessary," she said, arguing that the trade relationship with the U.S., when goods and services were considered, was close to being balanced and urging a solution to the brewing trade war.

Mr. Trump had already announced tariffs on all countries for their exports of steel, aluminium, automobiles and auto-parts to the U.S. Now, Washington is set to impose reciprocal tariffs on its trading partners on Wednesday, which Mr. Trump has termed 'Liberation Day' in America. Reciprocal tariffs – which are country-specific, are based on the idea that the U.S. will charge its partners tariffs equal to the tariffs it is charged by them. The details of how the tariffs will be worked out for each country are unclear.

Team approach: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, right, said the EU would diversify its trading ties . AFP

On Tuesday, Ms. Von der Leyen said that as part of its response, the EU would further diversify its trading partnerships and "double down" on the internal EU Single Market.

Listing some of the bloc's trading relationships, she said Brussels was hoping to conclude a trade deal with New Delhi by the end of this year. The Cabinet of EU Commissioners had visited India at the end of February to boost the partnership and the two sides had resumed trade talks, holding discussions in Brussels in March.

"I hear Americans, when they say some others have taken advantage of the rules. I agree. We also suffer from it. So let us work on it," Ms. Von der Leyen said.

Talks for trade deal

In the U.K., where Britons face an increasing cost of living and lower economic growth projection for 2025 than previously forecast, there were no plans for immediate retaliation against the U.S.

The apparent bonhomie between Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Mr. Trump and the fact that the two countries are negotiating a trade deal have not translated into a tariff exemption for the U.K.

Mr. Starmer expressed optimism about concluding a deal with the U.S. quickly and said that such an agreement would "mitigate" the impact of tariffs, in an interview with *Sky News*. The Prime Minister said he was talking to the sectors which would be impacted by the tariffs and that all options were on the table. However, he repeatedly said a trade war was not in the U.K.'s interest. He sidestepped a question on whether he was being "played" by Mr. Trump.

"This is clearly a very significant development," U.K. Trade and Business Secretary Johnathan Reynolds said in an interview to the *BBC*. The trading relationship between the two countries was fair and balanced, Mr. Reynolds said, adding that there was no need for the U.S. to include the U.K. in the April 2 tariff round.

This was an opportunity to strengthen the U.K.'s trade ties with other areas, Mr. Reynolds said, as he named India, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the EU, entities with whom London is currently engaged in trade talks.

Woman saved 91 hours after Myanmar earthquake

Associated Press
BANGKOK

Rescue workers saved a 63-year-old woman from the rubble of a building in Myanmar's capital on Tuesday, but hope was fading of finding many more survivors of the violent earthquake that killed more than 2,700 people, compounding a humanitarian crisis caused by a civil war.

Officials in Naypyitaw said the woman was pulled from the rubble 91 hours after being buried when the building collapsed in the 7.7 magnitude earthquake that hit midday on Friday. 2,719 people have now been found dead, with 4,521 others injured and 441 missing.

Israel PM drops security chief nominee Eli Sharvit

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Tuesday he had reversed a decision to appoint former navy commander Vice Admiral Eli Sharvit as security agency chief following criticism, including from key U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham.

Mr. Netanyahu had announced Mr. Sharvit's appointment on Monday, pushing back against a supreme court decision to freeze his government's move to dismiss incumbent director Ronen Bar.

Government of Karnataka
Department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage, Mysore.

TenderNotification Number:DAMH/CW/T-18/2024-25
Date: 27.03.2025

On behalf of the Governor, Government of Karnataka, the department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage, Mysuru has invited the itemwise tender for the 01 work (DAMH/2024-25:OW/WORK_INDENT- 124 (Call-2), under the standard tender documents KW-4.The amount Rs.136.00 lakhs kept for these tenders as per Standard Tender bid Document. Tender documents can be obtained through e-portal from date 28.03.2025 onwards.

Last date and time of any Queries for tender: 05.04.2025, 17.00 hrs. **Last date and time of tender submission**: 12.04.2025, 16.00 hrs. **Opening of Date and Time of Technical bid**: 16.04.2025, 16.30 hrs. **Opening of Date and Time of Financial bid**: 17.04.2025, 11.00 hrs. **Date and Time of Pre-bid meeting:** 04.04.2025, 11.00 hrs

Sd/- Commissioner, Department of Archaeology, Museums And Heritage, Mysore.

DIPR-DD-MYS/07/KSMCA-001/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
Karnataka Public Works, Department, Sirasi Division(U.K), Karnataka Ph: 08384-223164, Fax: 08384-224100
No. PWD/SR./Dn/AE/IFT/5054MDR.Imp/ 2024-25/3168 Date: 28.03.2025

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) (SHORT TERM) KW-4
e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

(1) The Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Sirasi invites tenders from eligible tenderers, for the construction of works detailed in the Table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the works given in the Table. **The price tender which will be opened only if the Tenderer is found to be qualified to execute the tendered works. The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. (26.03.2021)** (2) Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/eportal/index.seam** under login for Contractors: (3) Tenders must be accompanied by EMD Declaration form Proforma attached (4) Tenders must be electronically submitted (on-line through internet) with in the date and time published in e-procurement portal. The technical bid will be opened after prescribed time and date in the eprocurement portal, in the presence of the Tenderers who wish to attend at the Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Department, SIRSI Division. (5) Other details can be seen in the tender documents
(Total: 1 Work)

(1) Last date and time for Tender Queries/Clarifications: **07-04-2025 up to 16.00.00** (2) Last Date and Time for receipt of tenders: **08-04-2025 up to 16.00.00** (3) Date and Time for opening of Technical Bid: **09-04-2025 @ 16.30.00** (4) Date and Time for opening of Financial Bid: **11-04-2025 @16.00.00**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Public Work Department Division
Sirsi (Uttara Kannada)

DIPR/ADK/KSMCA/04/25-26 dt.01.04.2025

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Joint Director (Animal Husbandry), Ground Floor, Annex-3 Building, N.R. Square, Bengaluru- 560 002.

No: BBMP/2025-26/IND0130 **Date:01.04.2025**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike invites Short term tender from eligible bidders for Supply, Installation of WALK-IN-COOLERS to Animal Husbandry, BBMP for the year 2024-25.

Tender Reference No.	**No: BBMP/2025-26/IND0130**
Date of Commencement of downloading the documents from KPP portal	**from 01.04.2025 onwards.**
Last date & Time for submission of Queries in KPP portal	**03.04.2025 upto 5.00 p.m.**
Date, Time & Venue of Pre-bid Meeting:	**03.04.2025 at 11.30 a.m.** at Office of the JD(AH), Ground Floor, Annex-3, N.R. Square, Bangalore - 560 002.
Last date and time for uploading the tenders in KPP Portal.	**09.04.2025 upto 5.00 p.m.**
Date of Opening of technical bids in KPP Portal.	**11.04.2025 at 11.00 a.m.**

Further details can be obtained from the KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Joint Director (Animal Husbandry).

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No. CGM(Tech)/DGM(APCC&PROC)/EE-2/AEE/2025-26/002-17 Date : 01.04.2025

BRIEF SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited invites Bids on electronic mode for the following work against following Enquiry Number:

Sl. No.	Enquiry number/ Name of the Work
1	**KPTCL/2024-25/SS/WORK_INDENT2208** Replacement of 2X100 MVA, 220/66KV Power Transformers by 2x150MVA, 220/66KV Power Transformer at 220/66/11 KV Huygonahally Sub-Station in KR Pete Taluk, Mandya District on Total Turnkey basis including Supply of all Materials/ equipments, Mandatory Spares, Erection (Including dismantling and Civil Works) of all materials/ equipments, Testing and Commissioning.
2	**KPTCL/2024-25/SS/WORK_INDENT2209** Replacement of 220/66KV, 2X100 MVA Power Transformers by 220/66KV 2x150MVA Power Transformer at 220/66/11 KV Receiving Station KUSHALNAGAR in Kushalnagar Taluk, Kodagu District on Total Turnkey basis including Supply of all Materials/ equipments, Mandatory Spares, Erection (Including dismantling and Civil Works) of all materials/equipments, Testing and Commissioning.

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **03.04.2025.** Last date & time for receipt of Bids is **21.04.2025 at 15:00hrs.** Any extension of due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement portal. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager(Tech),
Corporate Office, 2nd Floor,
KPTCL, Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru - 560 009.

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number 1800 102 1878
Or write to us at customercare@thehindu.co.in
Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU · thehindu businessline · FRONTLINE · SPORTSTAR · The Hindu Young World · THE HINDU

COACH'S BACKING

I have not heard a negative word from Ponting till now: Wadhera

SANDEEP SAXENA

I didn't know that I would be playing so I had brought only one kit with me. I wanted to play my shots and take my chances. I have not heard a negative word from Ricky Ponting till now. He only talks positive things... when a coach gives such remarks, it boosts your confidence — PBKS' Nehal Wadhera after the win over LSG.

CLEAR VISION

Implemented what was discussed in the team meeting: Shreyas

SANDEEP SAXENA

It is the start we required. The boys played their roles really well. Every individual contributed to the best of their ability and implemented what was discussed in the team meeting. I always try to be in the present. Even this innings is history for me now — PBKS captain Shreyas Iyer.

INTROSPECTION

'I enhance my skillset with constructive self-criticism'

SANDEEP SAXENA

The key is to improve by 1 to 1.5% after every game, whether the performance was good or bad. I've always believed that the biggest room in the world is the room for improvement. So whenever I get the chance, I engage in constructive self-criticism and strive to enhance my skillset — PBKS' Arshdeep Singh.

TEMPERATURE DIFFERENCE

Not sure about the relevance of lifting saliva ban in India: Bobat

RITU RAJ KONWAR

In India, I don't view the saliva ban as that big an issue because you sweat enough. If you're playing in England, you can do with a little bit of saliva because you don't sweat much in the temperature there. I'm not sure it has that much relevance here in India — RCB director of cricket Mo Bobat.

Top-order makes it a stroll in the park for Punjab Kings

Opener Prabhsimran, skipper Shreyas and Impact Player Wadhera ensure a second win on the trot for the visiting side; Pant fails again as the Super Giants batters find the going tough against Arshdeep & Co. in their first home match

IPL-18

Pranay Rajiv
LUCKNOW

Opener Prabhsimran Singh followed up a disciplined performance from Punjab Kings bowlers with a blazing fifty to help his team outclass Lucknow Super Giants by eight wickets in an IPL 2025 match at the Ekana Stadium here on Tuesday.

Prabhsimran's early blitz ensured a comfortable win for Kings as they scaled LSG's 172-run target inside 17 overs.

The wicketkeeper-batter kicked things off by taking down LSG's pacers. While Shardul Thakur was driven through cover and slashed over point, Avesh Khan was dispatched over extra cover with a shot mirroring a tennis forehand.

Prabhsimran fared even better against the LSG spinners, employing a battery of sweeps, reverse sweeps and scoops to garner boundaries.

The 24-year-old reached his fifty off the 23rd ball and was threatening to wipe off the chase on his own before he was caught at the fence following an acrobatic relay catch involving Ayush Badoni and Ravi Bishnoi.

Kings skipper Shreyas Iyer marshalled the chase from thereon as he ticked off his second consecutive fifty.

Blitzkrieg: Prabhsimran's onslaught in the PowerPlay set up a facile win for Kings. SANDEEP SAXENA

With Impact Player Nehal Wadhera for company, Shreyas secured his side's second win in as many games.

Earlier, Shreyas' choice to put LSG in was validated by his bowlers led by pacer Arshdeep Singh (three for 43). The home team lost Mitchell Marsh, Aiden Markram and Rishabh Pant in the PowerPlay as the Kings attack clicked in unison.

With his top-order colleagues departing early, Orange Cap-holder Nicholas Pooran decided to bide his time. He eventually rose from his slumber by taking on the spinners. Pooran carved Yuzvendra Chahal for a couple of boundaries through the off-side before lofting him down the ground for a six.

But, with a third consecutive fifty on the horizon, Pooran was snared by Chahal, who baited the left-hander with a wide googly. The resultant miscue was pouched by Glenn Maxwell at long-on, silencing a boisterous home crowd.

LSG enjoyed a mini-recovery through a 47-run, sixth-wicket partnership between Badoni and Abdul Samad, which dragged the side past 170. But it proved insufficient in the face of Prabhsimran's onslaught.

Next assignment

LSG: April 4 vs MI
Lucknow, 7.30 p.m.

PBKS: April 5 vs RR
New Chandigarh, 7.30 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS

Aiden Markram b Ferguson 28 (*18b, 4x4, 1x6*), Mitchell Marsh c Jansen b Arshdeep 0 (*1b*), Nicholas Pooran c Maxwell b Chahal 44 (*30b, 5x4, 2x6*), Rishabh Pant c Chahal b Maxwell 2 (*5b*), Ayush Badoni c Maxwell b Arshdeep 41 (*33b, 1x4, 3x6*), David Miller c Prabhsimran b Jansen 19 (*18b, 3x4*), Abdul Samad c Priyansh b Arshdeep 27 (*12b, 2x4, 2x6*), Shardul Thakur (not out) 3 (*3b*), Avesh Khan (not out) 0 (*0b*); Extras (lb-1, w-6): 7; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 171.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-1 (Marsh, 0.4 overs), 2-32 (Markram, 3.5), 3-35 (Pant, 4.5), 4-89 (Pooran, 11.3), 5-119 (Miller, 15.5), 6-166 (Badoni, 19.2), 7-167 (Samad, 19.4).

KINGS BOWLING

Arshdeep 4-0-43-3, Ferguson 3-0-26-1, Maxwell 3-0-22-1, Jansen 4-0-28-1, Stoinis 2-0-15-0, Chahal 4-0-36-1.

PUNJAB KINGS

Priyansh Arya c Shardul b Digvesh 8 *(9b, 1x4)*, Prabhsimran Singh c Bishnoi b Digvesh 69 *(34b, 9x4, 3x6)*, Shreyas Iyer (not out) 52 *(30b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Nehal Wadhera **(Impact Player for Chahal)** (not out) 43 *(25b, 3x4, 4x6)*; Extras (lb-1, w-4): 5; Total (for two wkts. in 16.2 overs): 177.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-26 (Priyansh, 2.5), 2-110 (Prabhsimran, 10.1).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING

Shardul 3-0-39-0, Avesh 3-0-30-0, Digvesh 4-0-30-2, Bishnoi 3-0-43-0, Siddharth **(Impact Player for Miller)** 3-0-28-0, Samad 0.2-0-6-0.

Toss: PBKS.

PoM: Prabhsimran.

Punjab Kings won by eight wickets with 22 deliveries to spare.

Can Titans crash RCB's early momentum?

Familiarity factor: GT skipper Gill will be banking on former RCB pacer Siraj to deliver the goods at the Chinnaswamy Stadium. K. MURALI KUMAR

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

On paper in the lead-up to IPL-18 and on the field during the opening two matches, Royal Challengers Bengaluru has given the impression of a champion outfit.

On display was its considerable batting might, power-hitting ability and shrewd bowling skills as it recorded two fantastic victories over defending champion Kolkata Knight Riders and bogey side Chennai Super Kings.

Wednesday will be RCB's first opportunity to showcase its new, confident self to the Garden City faithful when it welcomes Gujarat Titans to the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

What should give RCB confidence is that Phil Salt up top, skipper Rajat Patidar in the middle, and Liam Livingstone and Tim David lower down have displayed serious batting muscle that can potentially take advantage of the small boundaries.

The bowling, led by Josh Hazlewood, seems ready for the arduous task of defending totals at the Chinnaswamy, which otherwise is a graveyard for bowlers.

Titans, however, will offer a good test. Though the Shubman Gill-led side lost the opener to Punjab Kings, it made a good fist of the 244-run chase, eventually reaching 232. In contrast to the previous season, there is a genuine urgency in run-making.

Then, in the 36-run victory over Mumbai Indians, Titans' bowling nous came to the fore, with speedster Prasidh Krishna leading the way, and ably supported by the wily Rashid Khan and Mohammed Siraj.

There is also the thinking Sai Kishore and the old warhorse Ishant Sharma to round off a capable bowling unit. Will they be able to crash RCB's early momentum?

Today's match

RCB vs. GUJARAT TITANS

Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 5

RCB 3 | GT 2

PREVIOUS MEETING

RCB won by **four wickets**, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

Ashwani can hustle the batters with his pace, reveals Rickelton

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

You are making your Indian Premier League debut on the hallowed turf at the Wankhede Stadium.

And you respond by picking the wickets of Ajinkya Rahane, Rinku Singh, Manish Pandey and Andre Russell. No wonder that Ashwani Kumar – a 23-year-old who hails from Jhanjheri, a village 20km away from Chandigarh – has become a household name, thanks to his exploits that led to Mumbai Indians rolling over Kolkata Knight Riders and opening its account in IPL 2025 on Monday.

Ryan Rickelton, the MI wicketkeeper whose maiden knock of substance ensured the home team improved on the Net Run Rate, said that the left-arm pacer has an element of surprise about him.

"He is a lot quicker than people recognise at first. That's a great attribute to have," Rickelton said.

"He can swing the new ball. It's obviously quite tough. We have got two specialist bowlers with the new ball [Trent Boult and Deepak Chahar] as well, but to have a second plan for that swing factor was really impressive. He rushes you a little bit as well."

Despite being at the receiving end, Kolkata Knight Riders all-rounder Ramandeep Singh was thrilled with his Punjab teammate's success. The two train together at the Launching Pad Cricket Academy in Mohali under Varinder Singh.

"Since we train together, I was looking forward to facing him in the match but it just did not happen tonight (on Monday)," Ramandeep said, with a chuckle.

Breathing fire: Debutant Ashwani grabbed the opportunity with both hands. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Patidar has coped with everything that comes with captaincy: Bobat

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

These are still early days in the IPL but Rajat Patidar has taken to captaincy like duck to water. Mo Bobat, Royal Challengers Bengaluru's director of cricket, is no doubt mighty impressed.

"The main thing you want to see is if they continue to let their personality come through and I think he has done that very well," Bobat said ahead of Wednesday's game against Gujarat Titans. "He has been very calm, inwardly and outwardly, and rarely takes a backward step.

"We saw that with his batting, especially against CSK. Every time we lost a wicket, he kept throwing punches. And he has coped with everything else that comes with captaincy also pretty well. At the minute, he has been excellent," the Brit added.

Making a mark: Patidar has been excellent as RCB skipper while Prasidh produced a match-winning spell for GT against MI. K. MURALI KUMAR

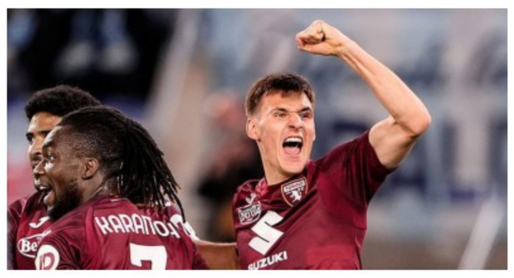
For Titans, speedster Prasidh Krishna will be returning to the familiar environment of the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium where he plays most of his domestic cricket for Karnataka. The 2025 IPL is also his first since the 2022 edition as he was plagued by multiple injuries.

"As much as I tried telling myself that it's just another tournament and game, I did feel that I was coming in after a few years of not having played a lot of T20 cricket," Prasidh said.

"The pace of the game has changed – 2022 to 2025. But it keeps moving forward and you have to keep up.

"And since I have been playing some amount of cricket now, the body is letting me do what I want to do."

INBRIEF



Torino holds Lazio, extends unbeaten run to five games

Substitute Gvidas Gineitis scored with eight minutes left for Torino to draw 1-1 at Lazio in Serie A and extend its unbeaten run to five games. Adam Marusic put the home side ahead with a stunning strike 12 minutes into the second half on Monday. Lithuanian midfielder Gineitis side-footed home the equaliser and lifted Torino to within one point of the top half of Serie A. Lazio, meanwhile, was seventh.

The results: Serie A: Lazio 1 (Marusic 57) drew with Torino 1 (Gineitis 82); Verona 0 drew with Parma 0. **LaLiga:** Celta Vigo 1 (Alfonso Gonzalez 45+2) drew with Las Palmas 1 (Moleiro 48).

Chahar exits in the first round of World Boxing Cup

National champion Lakshya Chahar lost to home favourite Wanderley Pereira 5-0 in a men's 80kg first round bout of the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 in Foz do Iguacu. Chahar was convincingly beaten by Pereira, a 2023 World Championships middleweight silver medallist who competed in the Paris Olympics in the 80kg category.

Kolkata Thunder Blades joins the UTT

A new franchise, Kolkata Thunder Blades, has joined Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) in its sixth season. Co-owned by Uneecops Group and MVIKAS Group, KTB will be coached by Anshul Garg. The new season will see teams battling it out for the title in Ahmedabad from May 29 to June 15.

Edwards is new England women's cricket team coach

Former captain Charlotte Edwards was on Tuesday appointed as new head coach of the England women's team. Edwards, 45, was the favourite to take up the post after Jon Lewis was sacked following England's Women's Ashes loss in Australia earlier this year. One of the outstanding batters of her generation, Edwards made more than 300 international appearances, winning two World Cups and lifting the Ashes five times across a 20-year playing career.

Sidharth Rawat moves up in S.M. Krishna Memorial Open

Sidharth Rawat defeated Digvijay Pratap Singh 6-4, 6-4 in the first round of the S.M. Krishna Memorial Open at the S.M. Krishna Tennis Stadium in Bengaluru on Tuesday. In another contest, Chirag Duhan fought past the Czech Republic's Dominik Palan 7-6 (7), 6-4. Russia's Maxim Zhukov, USA's Nick Chappell, and Japan's Ryuki Matsuda were the other winners on the opening day.

Jeevan and Vijay tumble early in Menorca Challenger

Top seeds Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth were beaten 6-2, 6-0 by wild card entrants Andrea Vavassori and Matteo Vavassori in the doubles pre-quarterfinals of the €145,250 Challenger tennis in Menorca, Spain.

Other results: $680,140 ATP, Houston: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Rafael Matos & Marcelo Zormann (Bra) bt Nicolas Barrientos (Col) & Rithvik Bollipalli 7-5, 6-4. **$30,000 ITF men, Santa Margherita Di Pula (first round):** Mariano Tammaro (Ita) bt Manas Dhamne 6-4, 3-6, 6-4. **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Gianrocco Filippo & Silvio Mencaglia (Ita) bt Chinmaya Dev Chauhan & Luca Parenti (Ita) 6-4, 6-0. **$40,000 ITF women, Bujumbura (first round):** Nahia Berecoechea (Fra) bt Pranjala Yadlapalli 1-6, 6-3, 6-2; Anjali Rathi bt Abhilasha Bista (Nep) 6-1, 6-3. **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Riya Bhatia & Sada Nahimana (Bdi) bt Sravya Shivani & Pooja Ingale 6-2, 6-1; Jasmijn Gimbrere (Ned) & Stephanie Visscher (Ned) bt Emma Van Poppel (Ned) & Pranjala Yadlapalli 6-1, 6-0; Weronika Falkowska (Pol) & Merel Hoedt (Ned) bt Priyanshi Bhandari & Diva Bhatia 6-1, 6-4.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 12.15 & 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)

Vandana retires from the international arena

The 32-year old is the most-capped Indian woman player with 320 appearances for the country; 158 goals spread over 15 years saw her become irreplaceable in the team

HOCKEY

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

Not a full goodbye: Vandana will continue to play domestic hockey and HIL. GETTY IMAGES

After 320 international appearances and 158 goals spread over 15 years that saw her become irreplaceable in the Indian women's hockey team, Vandana Katariya has decided to call it a day.

On Tuesday, the 32-year old announced her decision to retire from international hockey through a social media post thanking her teammates, coaches and supporters. "I don't know what to say. I am blank at the moment, both in words and thoughts. All I want is to spend some time with my team, people who have been my friends and family all these years," she admitted.

As the most capped female Indian hockey player ever, Vandana has been part of some of the team's biggest triumphs.

Her lightning runs down the sidelines, her ability to find the gaps, the precise angles to score and the ability to set up players upfront when no space was evident made her invaluable.

Vandana explained that while the decision was taken over the last two days and the team and staff informed on Monday, it had been on her mind for a while, not explicitly but as a constantly nagging thought. She will, however, continue to play domestic hockey and the Hockey India League.

Vandana's list of achievements is sterling – gold at the Asian Champions Trophy (2016, 2023) and the Nations Cup (2022), silver at the Asian Games (2018) and WACT (2013, 2018), bronze at the 2022 Commonwealth Games and 2014 and 2022 Asian Games besides the historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics.

She was given the Arjuna Award (2021) and the Padma Shri (2022), was named Hockey India Player of the Year in 2014 and Forward of the Year (2021, 2022).

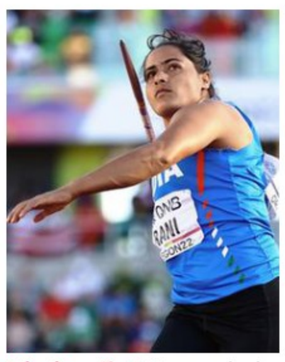
Impressive Dipanshu improves his personal best, goes over 75m

ATHLETICS

Sports Bureau

Dipanshu Sharma continued his impressive form with a personal best throw of 75.04m to take top spot in men's javelin at the 1st Indian Open athletics meet at the War Hero Stadium in Sangrur on Tuesday. It is also the third best throw in the world in Under-20 category this year, behind Ewald Jansen's two efforts.

Among the women, Jyoti Rakesh finished second with a best of 51.94m, behind veteran Annu Rani, who made a last-minute entry on the morning of the competition and expectedly took top spot with a 56.43m throw.



Winning effort: Annu cashed in on her last-minute entry to take the big prize. FILE PHOTO

The results: Men: 400m: 1. Prakhar Sharma (Utk, 47.81s), 2. Tarandeep Singh (Pun, 47.91s), 3. Lovepreet Singh (Pun, 48.46s); **800m:** 1. Satyam Chauhan (Army, 1:56.10), 2. Akshay Chandel (UP, 1:57.72), 3. Vinay Kumar (UP, 2:00.79); **1,500m:** 1. Ritesh Ohre (MP, 3:52.05), 2. Arjun Waskale (MP, 3:52.68), 3. Mukul Saini (UP, 3:57.21); **5,000m:** 1. Naresh Kumar (Raj, 14:50.73), 2. Akash Ganga (UP, 15:09.65), 3. Ankit Kumar (Del, 15:26.70); **10,000m:** Vinod Singh (MP, 29:42.61), Sahil Sagar (Army, 29:48.56).

Shot put: 1. Amit Kumar Singh (Army, 17.54m), 2. Varinderpal Singh (Pun, 17.43m), 3. Iqbal Singh Chahal (Pun, 17.18m); **Discus:** 1. Prateek Maan (Har, 50.74m), 2. Ashish Kumar (UP, 49.51m), 3. Vaibhav (HP, 47.82m); **hammer:** 1. Taranveer Singh (Navy, 63.79m), 2. Gurdev Singh (Pun, 62.22m), 3. Nitish Tomar (Pun, 57.36m).

Javelin: 1. Dipanshu Sharma (UP, 75.04m), 2. Rishabh Nehra (UP, 72.29m), 3. Manjinder Singh (Pun, 71.14m); **high jump:** 1. Gurjeet Singh (Har, 1.90m), 2. Pushpendra Kumar (Raj, 1.90m), 3. Arnav Tyagi (Army, 1.90m); **triple jump:** 1. Dablu Roy (WB, 15.17m), Harpal Singh Mann (Pun, 15.12m), 3. Kuljeet Singh (Del, 15.08m).

Women: 400m: 1. Akshi Malik (Cdg, 55.72s), 2. Shivkanya Mukati (MP, 55.79s), 3. Vidhi Rawal (Jha, 56.43s); **5,000m:** 1. Khushi Raghu (MP, 17:35.23); 10000m: 1. Bushra Khan (MP, 35:15.92), 2. Shivani (Utk, 38:40.65); **hammer:** 1. Tanya Chaudhary (UP, 57.86m), 2. Ripudaman Kaur (Pun, 47.75m), 3. Varsha Kanpure (Mah, 44.53m); **discus:** 1. Priya (Har, 48.12m), 2. Arshdeep Kaur (Pun, 45.88m), 3. Garima (RSPB, 45.69m).

High jump: 1. Sonu Kumari (Har, 1.60m); **javelin:** 1. Annu Rani (UP, 56.43m), 2. Jyoti (Har, 51.94m), 3. Uma Choudhary (Raj, 50.68m); **triple jump:** 1. Niharika Vashisht (Pun, 13.43m), 2. Arshdeep Kaur (12.79m), 3. Simran (Pun, 11.79m); **shot put:** 1. Shiksha (Har, 15.88m), 2. Vidhi (UP, 15.01m), 3. Vanshika Shekhawat (Raj, 13.64m).

Arjun Maini to drive for HRT Ford Performance team

Press Trust of India
MEUSPATH (GERMANY)

India's Arjun Maini will drive for the HRT Ford Performance team in his fifth year in the German touring car racing series.

Last year, he had secured his best result of his DTM career by finishing seventh in the drivers' standings. In the previous three seasons (from 2021 to 2023), the 27-year-old from Bengaluru had finished 12th, 19th and 20th respectively. The official test day for the new DTM season will take place on Wednesday. Haupt Racing Team (HRT) enters two Ford Mustang GT3s in the top-class sprint series for the first time this year.

The cockpits for Ford's factory-supported DTM comeback after 36 years will be occupied by Arjun and Fabio Scherer. The opening race weekend is scheduled from April 25 to 27.

Cricket needs reform, but players' body doesn't inspire confidence

BETWEEN WICKETS
Suresh Menon

Everybody has a plan to make cricket more equitable, bring in more money, have more rational calendars, comprehensible points systems and so on. The International Cricket Council, sadly, isn't one with such plans. Some years ago, the Woolf Report put forward ideas which were heartily ignored. Now the World Cricketers' Association (WCA), a body with little power since India doesn't recognise it, has published a report it claims can bring in an additional $240 million annually.

This players' body (originally called FICA or Federation of International Cricketers' Associations) has identified four areas that require urgent solution in a recent paper entitled *Protecting History, Embracing Change: A Unified Coherent Global Future.*

These range from scheduling (which it says is "chaotic, inconsistent and confusing") to finance ("not optimised, balanced or used effectively") and from regulations (outdated for a "transnational era with limited security for players") to leadership, or lack of it (there is "regional self-interest, short-term thinking and an imbalance of power").

If the rationalisation is aimed at making more money, it is ironic because that's what the WCA is accusing the Board of Control for Cricket in India of focusing on all the time. Should success be calculated in purely monetary terms?

Many of the recommendations have been around for a while. It would have been possible to take the rest more seriously if the essence went beyond complaining about the IPL's lack of love for the rest of the world.

The IPL stimulates half the global economy in cricket, avers the report, "but shares only 0.3 percent of the revenue with other countries, and less than ten percent with the players."

There is too the recommendation that India and Pakistan play more often "to create significantly further global interest and drive new growth." In other words, please make even more money, India, and share it with the rest of us.

Another recommendation is that India's men players ought to be released "to play in global T20 leagues outside the IPL" to increase the leagues' earning potential. In other words, please help us make more moolah. Money is the root of all good, suggests the WCA.

The International Cricket Council and the BCCI (anyone who can spot the difference is entitled to a prize) have been cavalier about financial accountability. Hence the WCA recommendation: "All distributions from the ICC to National Governing Bodies to be publicly accounted for and independently audited against clear KPI (Key Performance Indicators) and enforcement mechanisms (i.e. future reductions / clawback penalties for any malpractice)." The fact that this obvious practice is a recommendation indicates it is neither obvious nor a practice.

Perhaps an unstated intention in the report is the hope that Indian players (men) would make a case for playing in other domestic T20 franchises for the greater financial benefit of both the individual and the game. Can they sue for restraint of trade, for example? The Indian Contracts Act 1872 which governs contracts might gain currency if that were to happen.

The WCA seems to suggest that nothing can be done about the power of the BCCI and the IPL unless there is a response from within. This is an insidious way of ensuring the growth and spread of the game. As regular readers of this column know, I am not always a great fan of the way the BCCI goes about its job, but isolating India or cutting the BCCI down to size is hardly the way forward for cricket. The WCA report is unlikely to make the slightest difference to either, however.

Is the ICC in need of reform? Yes, it is. The term of its sole independent director (Indira Nooyi) ended in August last, its CEO (Geoff Allardyce) quit in January. Neither has been replaced. Three countries, India, England and Australia together take away 87% of the revenues. There is a "lack of overarching leadership", as the WCA puts it. Administrators, unlike players, see no merit in those in form helping those struggling. Players complain there's too much cricket, a lot of it meaningless, but play on nevertheless.

Somewhere between India's hyper-nationalistic responses to issues and the WCA's largely single-pointed one there is a solution. Its root lies in altruism, not self-interest.

Thangaraja and Saptak in the van

GOLF

Sports Bureau
GREATER NOIDA

Local lad Saptak Talwar executed a spectacular front nine to share the lead with Sri Lankan N. Thangaraja, with a five-under 67, on the opening day of the ₹1.5 crore Adani invitational golf championship at the Jaypee Greens and Spa Resort on Tuesday.

Leading scores: 1T. N Thangaraja, Saptak Talwar 67; **3T.** Om Prakash Chouhan, Arjun Prasad, Md.Somrat Sikdar, Sunhit Bishnoi 68; **7T.** Himmat Rai, Federico Zucchetti, Karandeep Kochhar 69; **10T.** K Prabagaran, Aryan Anand, Arjun Sharma, Chiragh Kumar, Shaurya Bhattacharya, Dhruv Sheoran, Yuvraj Sandhu, Honey Baisoya 70.

Rampant Bengaluru hosts clinical Goa in ISL semifinals

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

High on a thumping 5-0 win over Mumbai City FC in the one-legged knockout a few days ago, Bengaluru FC will host FC Goa in the first leg of their Indian Super League semifinal at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Wednesday.

BFC's biggest home victory in the ISL powered the side to the last-four stage, while FC Goa finished second in the standings with 48 points from 24 league-stage matches.

This will mark Bengaluru FC head coach Gerard Zaragoza's first ISL semifinal appearance. "I'm looking forward to it. I came here to win trophies, and we have three other really good teams involved in the semifinals too," Zaragoza said.

FCG will want to erase memories from its semifinal fixture in the previous season, which resulted in losses in both legs against MCFC.

Both BFC and FCG have been prolific in attack. The host's experienced striker Sunil Chhetri, who came off the bench to score against MCFC, is one away from equaling his highest goal tally in a single ISL season (14 in 2017-18). BFC will also look to Ryan Williams to make his trademark runs.

The visitor is similarly packed with goal-scoring talent. Winger Brison Fernandes, who has scored seven goals and provided two assists, is a key threat. Armando Sadiku and Iker Guarrotxena, with nine and seven goals respectively, will test the BFC defence.

Main man: Williams has been in good form for BFC. K. MURALI KUMAR